Commentary

Volume Sixty, Number Three, September 1975

Egalitarianism & International Politics

ROBERT W. TUCKER

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HANNAH ARENDT'S AMERICA / Nathan Glazer

A STORY / David Shahar

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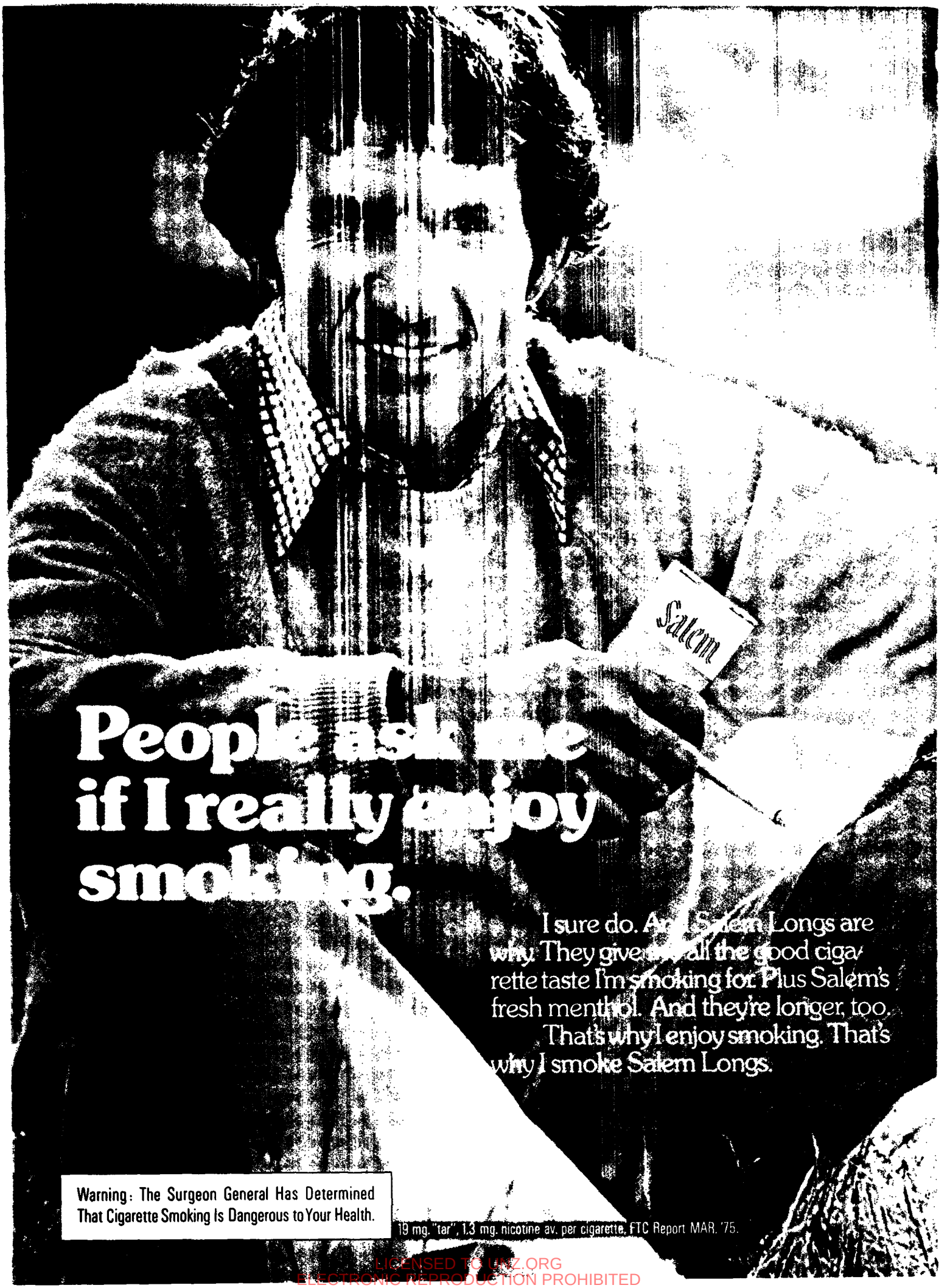
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Commentary

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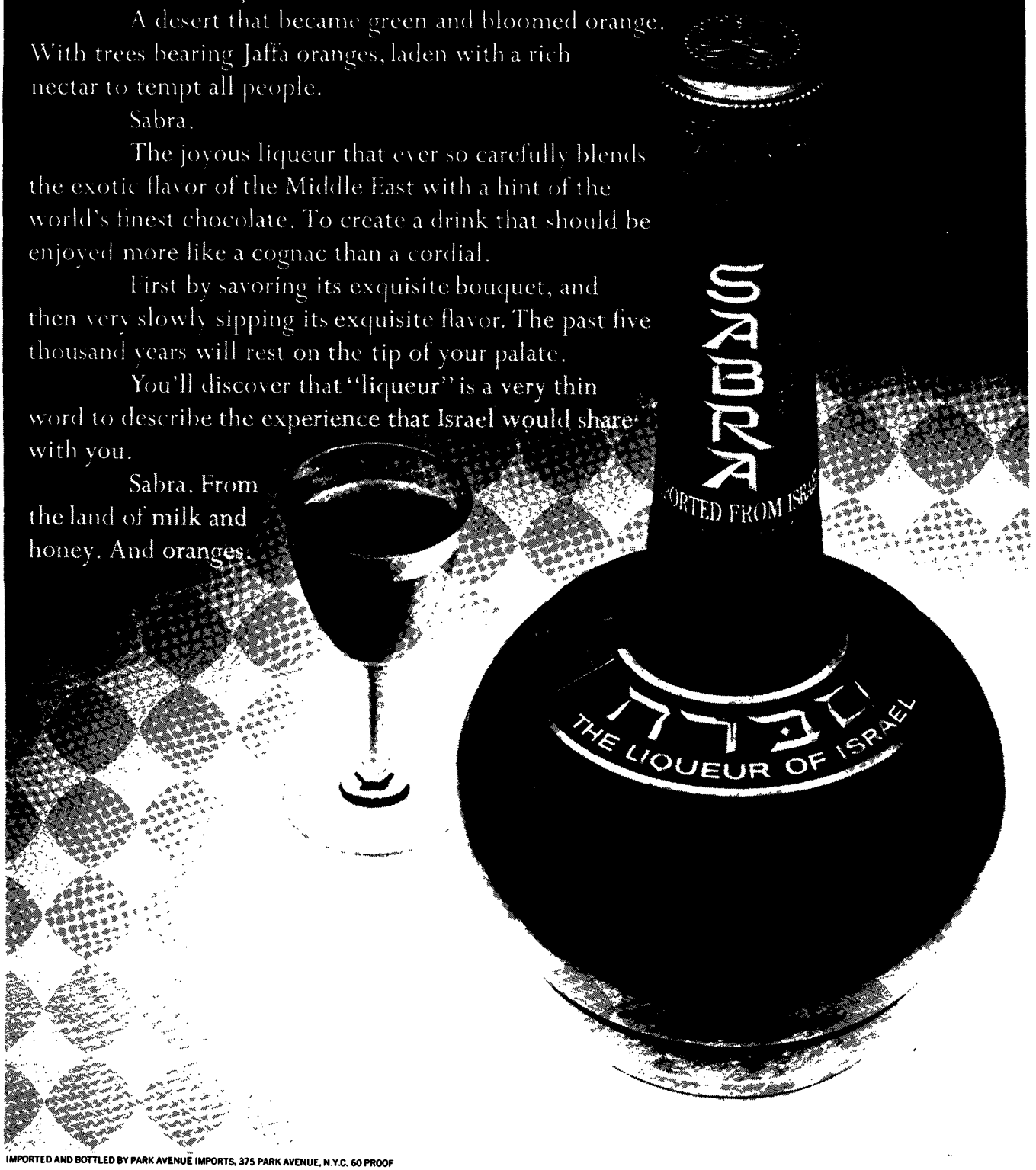

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Letters from Readers

Southern Liberalism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was both impressed and intrigued by Michael Novak's article, "Tom Wicker's Attica" [May]. I have not yet read *A Time To Die*, and can neither endorse nor question the severity of his judgment upon it. I suspect that it is not unwarranted.

Tom Wicker is an old and admired friend of mine; but I am often puzzled—and sometimes, I admit, irritated—by his tendency to mar otherwise penetrating and generous comment (I think, for instance, of his tributes to the constitutional conservatism of Sam Ervin, Jr.) by hat-tipping to conventional Yankee liberals. He does seem to obey, occasionally, a mysterious compulsion not merely to let his opinions speak on their merits, but to establish his bona fides with certain non-Southerners to whom he might, on account of his regional origins, be suspect.

The main point of this letter, however, is to urge Mr. Novak to deepen his perception of Southern liberalism, so-called. He writes, for instance, that "it is characteristic of Southern liberals that they have come late to liberal attitudes on race . . . [and] usually, they can date to the day and hour the first time they touched a black, embraced a black, etc." Not so, I think. This may be peculiarly true of Tom Wicker. For my part, I have lived on intimate (if initially paternalistic) terms with blacks since early childhood; and I regard my views, such as they are, as forming a continuum of consciousness. I also regard them, by the way, as having little to do with political correctness or fashion and much to do with the decencies of human behavior to which our best religious and political traditions enjoin us. I think Mr. Novak would be told essentially the same thing by hundreds of sentient Southerners whose views on race are "liberal" as the world judges such things, but who have not felt sufficiently guilt-stricken to commerce with or sentimentalize the "revolutionary theater" that, in Mr. Novak's view, preempted Tom Wicker's good judgment at Attica.

Indeed, Mr. Novak lumps together people like Willie Morris and Ramsey Clark, along with Wicker, although to my mind there is no discernible resemblance between Willie Morris's historically-minded and fine-textured perceptions of blacks and the more shallow, conventional, and defensive attitudes which Mr. Novak attributes to the "Southern liberal" as a type.

I urge Mr. Novak to reexamine the finer pages of Morris's *North Toward Home* and *Yazoo*, as well as C. Vann Woodward's relevant essays, and see if he does not find there a searching honesty, a dry light, that bears little likeness to the conventional liberal-chic he rightly deplores. By the same token, there are worlds of difference between, say, Vernon Jordan and Jesse Jackson—although both are indeed Southerners.

It was until quite recently assumed by many non-Southerners that the South is monolithic, while in fact it is a mosaic of distinguishable attitudes and political subcultures; and it is regrettable that a writer of Mr. Novak's quality and standards should reinforce, anew, the myth that Southerners (even Southern liberals) are all alike. Otherwise, his observations seem to me both timely and penetrating; and I suspect they will have a profound effect on us all.

EDWIN M. YODER, JR.
Greensboro, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I haven't written a letter to the editor pertaining to my own work in about fifteen years. But the suggestion in Michael Novak's article that I have paid deference to the Yankee liberal-chic on questions of race in America is not only patently dissembling and absurd—misrepresenting the very substance of my books and everything I have stood for over the years—it imputes a dishonesty before the conventional Northern fashions which I consider a personal affront.

Since Mr. Novak has linked me to this attitude, as well as to his specious idea that it is characteristic of Southern liberals that they have come late to liberal attitudes on race and usually "can date to the day and hour the first time they touched a black," I would refer him specifically to the Mississippi section of my book *North Toward Home*, published eight years ago, a

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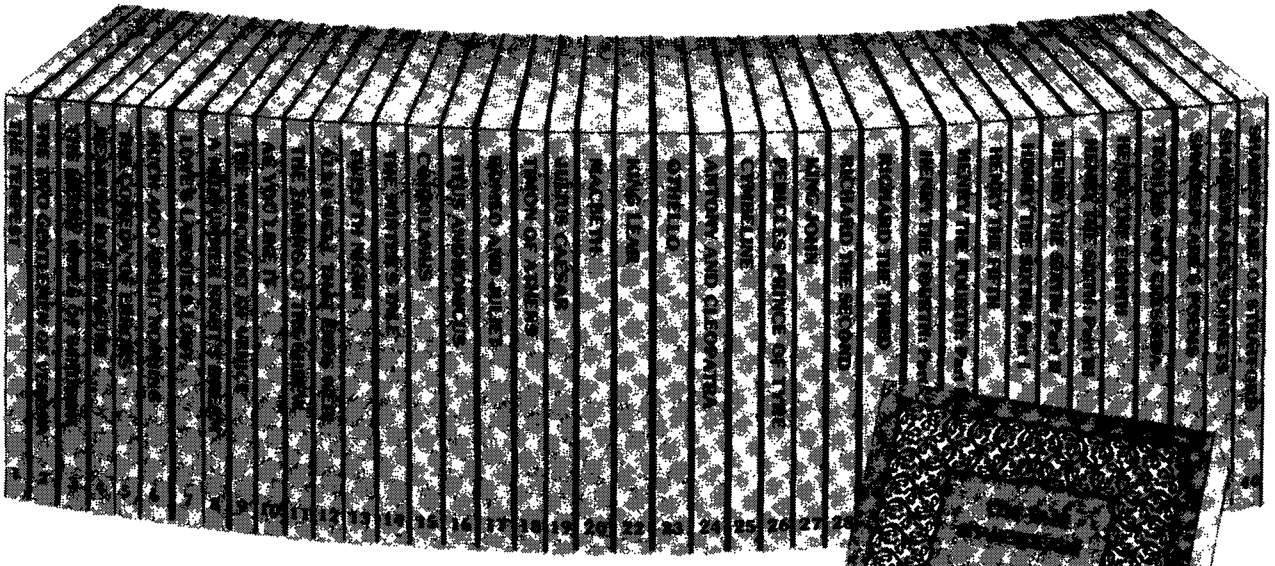

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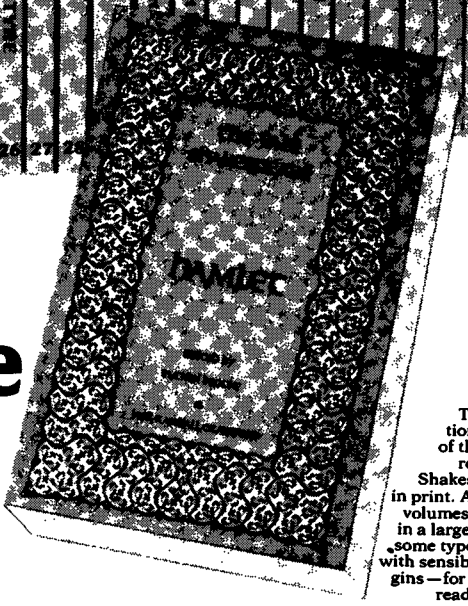

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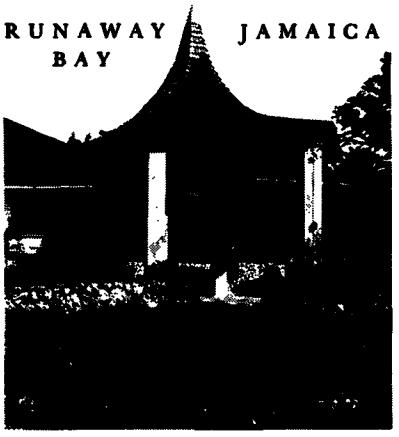

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substantial part of which describes growing up among blacks in a small cotton town in the delta. I would further suggest he peruse my book, *Yazoo,* about the massive integration of the schools in my home town, especially the concluding pages in which I am as pointedly critical as a man can be of the voguish Northern Left. This latter section was further excerpted as the lead article in the 120th anniversary number of *Harper's* and leaves no room for doubt that it was nourished in my bones to distrust this easy and sanctimonious state of mind. In numerous articles and speeches since I was eighteen years old, and in the whole spirit of the Texas *Observer* and *Harper's* under my editorship, I have tried to show both personally and in the historical context the complexities of the white-black relationship in this country. As for being one of Mr. Novak's johnnie-come-latelies, I can only remind him, among other things, that as early as 1955—one year after *Brown* v. *Board of Education*—my contemporaries and I on the pages of a Southern university newspaper were advocating the full integration of the schools and racial good-will and harmony at a time when it was not quite as safe to do so as it might be to type out neatly-packaged sociological notions these days from a suite of offices on the Upper East Side.

For some one-hundred-fifty years my people, who settled and founded Mississippi, have experienced the complexity, the tragedy, the promise of living day-to-day and in close proximity with black people. In their own way, bless them, they tried to instill a certain decency and humanity between the races long before Mr. Novak's forebears across the Atlantic ran out of potatoes, or whatever it was they ran out of. From my great-grandfather, the leading newspaper editor of his day there and one of the few white men in the Mississippi Reconstructionist legislature, and from the example of my grandmother, who was the niece of the man who defeated Jefferson Davis for governor and who later gave the dedication address at the Washington Monument, I inherited certain decencies of human behavior. My coming to maturity in this inheritance, of which I am immensely proud—and of which I believe my young son will be also—had nothing to do with any momentary Northern whim, most assuredly not, but sprang from the best political and human traditions of the Southland. From this experience in blood and in a community of history I have written as honestly as I know how to write of what it means to be a Southerner and an American. To imply that what I have written has been in response to fashionable Northern attitudes (the more rabid of our Southern reactionaries always called it "the Yankee dollar") or indeed to anything beyond the values and perceptions and memories and feelings I have as a Southerner and as a writer, is an act of gross distortion and ill-will. It is worse than a lie.

Mr. Novak's treatment of Southern liberals in general on the race issue is merely sloppy, superficial, and uninformed, easily recognizable as such by any intelligent Southerner. It would be laughed out of any civilized discourse there. It is, to borrow the word coined by my hero Maury Maverick of Texas in the 1930's to describe the Manhattan mind, an exercise in gobbledygook. It is the same old know-nothing, condescending Yankee interpretation of the South as a simplistic entity, in which all Southerners are similar and are ordained to act out the sociological roles prepared for them by naive and righteous busybodies, be they carpetbaggers, abolitionist schoolmarms, or monthly theorists. It ignores entirely the vital strain of "liberalism," if we must call it that, which has run so deeply through the South for years. It is bereft of even the slightest intelligence and sensitivity before the burdens of Southern history from which C. Vann Woodward gave us his eloquent challenge and testimonial, and of which so many of my generation of Southerners are the inheritors.

I've watched Mr. Novak a little, and he strikes me as one of those New York boys who writes entirely too much for the periodicals, presuming on the fine old chords of history, what precious little sense he has of it, to unravel his turgid expertise on things he does not begin to know or suffer in his heart. We Mississippi boys learned a long time ago to stake ourselves not only against the Northern fashions, but also against the petty, bloodless presumption of a certain breed of New York commentators.

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Indeed! I'd trade him to the liberal-chics for two shots of sour mash.

WILLIE MORRIS

Bridgehampton, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Reading in Michael Novak's article that prisons have been much improved since Dickens and that Attica costs a good deal of money to operate, we apparently should rejoice that the prisoners there "live better than a majority of people on this planet." Reading that white immigrants suffered hardship and violence, we apparently should agree that white workers are "the new niggers of America" and that racial discrimination is now an outdated liberal myth. Indeed, we apparently should believe from this reading that race is not a problem in the urban North and that Cicero and South Boston simply reflect what Mr. Novak describes as amorality, hostility, and competition free of racial feeling.

Of course, personal experience, census data, the research literature, and what we can read, see, and hear in the news coverage from Boston and elsewhere should teach us otherwise. If Mr. Novak's academic education and working life have not convinced him, no argument in this letter is likely to do so.

Mr. Novak may be unaware of the extent to which he himself has racial illusions, divides white from black, and expresses the stereotyped views of the white ethnic backlash. He lacks the very sense of ambiguity and humane cynicism he seems to espouse. . . .

EUGENE S. MORNELL

Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Michael Novak explicitly states the subject matter of his essay on the last page: his fury over "the masses of [white] people" becoming "the new niggers of America"; Tom Wicker and Attica have become for him symbols of this redefined fundamentalist Southernized liberal-revolutionary ideology. Whites, that restless, not-so-silent majority, are human too. For the children and grandchildren of Austro-Hungarian serfs . . ., whose ancestors were greeted with the term "Hunkie," now to be called "Honkie" by the descendants of black slaves, and "pigs" and "racists" by self-righteous liberals, is to have ancient stigma and insult reawakened. . . .

Mr. Novak demands empathy for white Americans, but cannot seem to identify in the slightest with Tom Wicker and his life history of wrestling for *his* liberation. . . . He cannot identify with a Southern white man who feels suddenly and finally liberated from the burdens of the Southern past. (I also have some difficulty in seeing everything reduced, or seemingly so, to ethnicity.) Yet Mr. Novak is *also* right in mistrusting this new freedom. Is this new liberation to be attained by repudiating, dehumanizing still another group, Wicker's erstwhile ancestors and contemporary Northern whites?. . .

In emphasizing the differences in racial relations between the North and South, Mr. Novak joins an ancient tradition that denies that the North is like the South, and maintains that "we" are not like "them." Just as the white South could not tolerate the self-righteous abolitionists and carpetbaggers, the contemporary white North does not want Southern liberals flogging it with their moral superiority. . . . At any rate, such works as Joel Kovel's *White Racism* and Lewis Killian's *White Southerners* carefully dispel the common belief that the North is radically different from the South in the extent of its racial beliefs. . . . Far from Northern and Southern whites being of different species, George Tindall in "Beyond the Mainstream: The Ethnic Southerners" (*Journal of Southern History*, 1974), argues that immigrant white ethnics and Southerners share a common experience, bear a common stigma as the perpetual outsiders to the American mainstream (even as they are hyper-American), and defiantly assert their cultural distinctiveness. . . .

Mr. Novak accuses Wicker of "sentimentalizing the sufferings of blacks." By offering historical examples (which are in themselves true) that whites and white ethnics have suffered too, perhaps even more, and that prisons in America are far better than their counterparts in other places. . . Mr. Novak attempts, and perhaps to many succeeds, in *relativizing* the suffering of blacks—in Attica, in

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America at present, and perhaps during slavery. Many Slavic-Americans with whom I have conducted field research insist that serfdom under the Hungarians was a far crueler experience than was slavery for blacks in America, and that, after all, they or their parents did not enslave the blacks here, but immigrated to a society where racism was practiced by others. There seems to be taking place at present a nationwide contest, participated in by all ethnic, racial, age, and sex groups, each competing for most-oppressed-minority status. . . .

Turning finally to Attica: . . . Nowhere does Mr. Novak entertain the possibility of a relation among social structure, economy, polity, ideology, and deviance. In his view, criminals have a character disorder because they have a character disorder. Is that why individuals fail? Is it a moral flaw, a genetic defect? One might recall that in the period of the great Southern and Eastern European immigration to America, American prisons and asylums were increasingly filled with these social "undesirables" who had gone mad or turned to illegitimate means of "making it" in America. If some psychodynamic flaw is to be located within the individual, it must also be located in the social experiences that led to that "flaw." Mr. Novak may wish to remind me that these inmates committed crimes, which I do not dispute. But it is not enough to reform the criminal; such reform must be accompanied by a reform of the society which makes criminality necessary. . . .

To ignore the hidden and embattled humanity of the inmates and say that they "had shown by their crimes that they did not deserve the society of men" is to make of them "niggers," regardless of race or ethnicity. When we make another nonhuman or subhuman, we dehumanize ourselves as well. We are all capable of rationalization; whether or not we indulge in it is another matter. Mr. Novak's essay is (as I read it) a plea that "the masses of people who are constantly at the edges of [Wicker's] text" be recognized as human beings. But only when *everyone* is recognized as human will *anyone* be recognized as human. . . .

HOWARD F. STEIN
Community Mental Health Center
Meharry Medical College
Nashville, Tennessee

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I want to express my appreciation for the publication of Michael Novak's article. I found it accurate, rational, insightful, cutting right through the soft underbelly of Wicker's posture and position. What a relief, after all the moralizing muck Wicker has drowned us in.

VIRGINIA TENZER
Storrs, Connecticut

MICHAEL NOVAK writes:

I accept unhesitatingly Edwin M. Yoder, Jr.'s kindly-voiced invitation and critique. I would want his point made about Catholics; it should be made about any culture. "A people is multiform and various in any one era, even in a relatively homogeneous sample," I once wrote, describing Catholics: ". . . Clare Booth Luce and Graham Greene, Charles de Gaulle and Mario Savio, Daniel Berrigan and Evelyn Waugh, Sophia Loren and Cesar Chavez, each finds his place; Simone Weil, Pascal, Richelieu, Chaucer, Alexander VI. . . ." With that sentence of deliberate contrasts echoing in memory, I wrote in the opening paragraph of my essay on Tom Wicker: "Not only do many of the most eminent blacks who have codified white-black relations derive from Southern culture—leaders as diverse as Martin Luther King, Jesse Jackson, and Vernon Jordan; many of our most outspoken white liberals, too, those who are, as it were, almost fixated on this issue, have been Southerners: men like Lyndon Johnson, Bill Moyers, Garry Wills, Larry King, Willie Morris, Ramsey Clark, and Tom Wicker." That each of these men is different, that their voice is not monolithic, is important to the larger point: grasping the texture of Northern reality is as hard for a Southerner as grasping the texture of Southern reality is for a Northerner.

Mr. Yoder makes plain, for example, that in attributing to all Southerners the dating of the "day and the hour" of their first meeting with blacks I was too much misled by Wicker's testimony; I accept his correction, and Willie Morris's, too, and recognize that in other nuances of my opening, I may have hit only the circle and not the bull's eye. (It is interesting that no one defends Wicker's positions, or attacks the body of my piece, yet never have I received so much mail or so many telephone calls.)

I accept all the more willingly Mr. Yoder's praise of Willie Morris's *North Toward Home*. At the time of its appearance, I was struggling through my own encounters with Northeastern intellectual life, and Mr. Morris's book encouraged me to "go home" myself, to rethink my own autobiographical voyage. The result was "Confessions of a White Ethnic" in *Harper's*, when Mr. Morris was no longer there. Secondly, the book in substance and in form revealed an America that most of the rest of us could not have known, and it taught me to respect and to listen to Mississippi, not quite Faulkner's Mississippi, in a new way. Southern writers, indeed, became for me a distinctive type of American "ethnic" group: having a distinctive culture, way of perceiving, fund of metaphor, unique moral sense, and in their case extensive scholarly and artistic expression. The way Southerners recognize one another on foreign Yankee soil, at a large party, say, and form immediately an animated circle, accents thickening, touches exchanged, jokes and greetings brought out of storage, offers a powerful example of diversity enduring over time.

On the basis of his books, I would be eager, therefore, to exempt Willie Morris from the limits so evident in Wicker. Yet his unhappy letter illustrates exactly the insensitivity to Northern complexity I had in mind. Thinking of myself as a "Yankee" is something of a jar, for one thing; where I grew up, the term still had a Civil War echo to it, from far before my family's arrival in this land, and it suggested families who lived on hills, liked quiet, were officials of the Boy Scouts, and ran both Harvard and faraway banks. "New York boy" doesn't quite fit either, and, indeed, if memory serves, Mr. Morris has lived both in Manhattan and on Long Island considerably more years than I. It wasn't potatoes my ancestors ran out of, but patience with hunger, jail, edicts against their native tongue, and forced conscription in other nations' armies. My grandfather gave no address at the Washington monument, but he did fashion a small cross on a hill in Eastern Slovakia when he was sixteen, which stands there yet.

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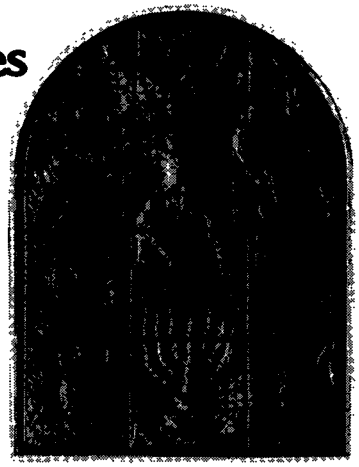

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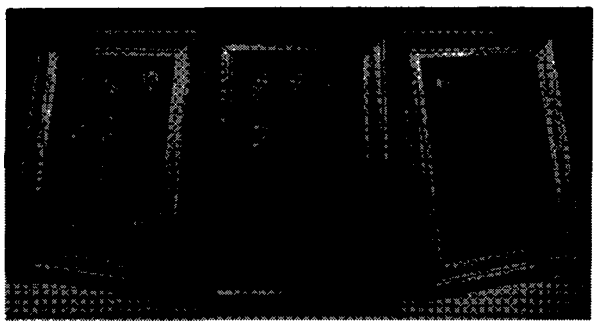

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Far be it from me to accuse Mr. Morris of bowing to Northern liberals. His book shows him far more involved with blacks than Wicker, and earlier. But Yazoo is not Detroit, and the social structure of Charlotte is so unlike the social structure of, say, Buffalo, that I cannot comprehend those eminent justices who leap over mountains of empirical material, not to say historical experiences, to apply to Northern cities logic derived from Southern cases.

Much decency, liberalism, and charity no doubt went into white-black relations in Mississippi and elsewhere; nonetheless, the average black migrant from the South to the North was three or four years behind whites in school in the North, and neglect of all sorts drove them northward. The Magyar nobility that emptied out Eastern Slovakia played a historical role in tune with the Southern white aristocracy: they linked Catholic immigrants and black migrants in an unchosen destiny, driving them toward a distant rendezvous. The main issue between the races is now being played out on different terrain, according to different rules, in a foreign culture distant from the South.

To Eugene S. Mornell: Before Martin Luther King, Jr. chose Cicero as a battle site, Cicero had suffered decades of ethnic warfare; Al Capone had his headquarters there. Before Brahmin Boston salved its conscience by asking South Boston alone to bear the entire price of a segregation that antedates the coming of the Irish, segregated South Boston was locked in bitter ethnic struggle. That racial feeling figures in white ethnic struggles I nowhere deny. I do emphatically ask for proof that there is anything that can fairly be described as "white ethnic backlash." In every study known to me —and several are presented or summarized by Norman Nie and Andrew Greeley in *Ethnicity* (John Wiley, 1975)—proof of that journalistic, and I believe nativistic, tag has not been forthcoming. Quite the opposite.

There are important differences between a discrimination based (a) solely on color; or (b) on a past relationship as master and slave, with its attendant guilts, complicities, and fascinations; or (c) on a bitter struggle over neighborhoods, turf, places in college, jobs, Israeli friends, was what kind of physical safety, the economic safety of one's mortgage, and the stability of one's old age. Between the several black cultures and the several Catholic cultures in America, there are deep cleavages in sense of values, in moral practices, in style, dress, behavior, etc. Before one can assert that such Catholic hostility as exists toward blacks is based on race alone, one would have to factor out all the other reasons for such hostility. I wish Mr. Mornell *had* presented an argument; for these are matters of the utmost importance, which our scholars understand not too well but too little and now a little late. Incidentally, Mr. Mornell may have failed to notice that the front line of the liberal imagination is no longer where he last looked, but in new and unfamiliar territory.

To Virginia Tenzer, I am of course grateful. And also to Howard F. Stein, whose graduate thesis on Slovaks, in the town where both Andy Warhol and I chanced at least partly to grow up, McKeesport, Pennyslvania, has pioneered in a still not crowded field. I'm grateful for Mr. Stein's assistance in humanizing my outlook after each of my appearances in these pages. He tries so hard to see just what I am saying; I appreciate it. Some notes: Differences in attitudes toward blacks may not be "radical" and still be immensely significant for policy. The patterns of the Wallace vote are strikingly dissimilar, e.g., in ethnically diverse districts, although voters in each district may in separate ways discriminate against blacks. It cannot be repeated too often that the Wallace vote is preeminently Protestant, not Catholic —16 per cent vs. 8 per cent in 1968. When even 30 per cent of Catholics go for Wallace in a given district, that is shattering news; but it is old hat in many Protestant areas. The quality, salience, and historical meaning of racial feeling are more important than its mere presence. Finally, I believe I paid Tom Wicker a high human compliment: treating him as a man, not an ideologue, and with normal human cynicism.

Moderate Egyptians

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joan Peters's "In Search of Moderate Egyptians" [May] conveys impressions so contrary to those of my COMMENTARY article, "Conversations in Cairo" [December 1974], that I feel I owe your readers a "reaction."

Miss Peters speaks about Egyptian "sentiments"; I spoke mainly about the reasoning of Egyptians. The two are not the same. I leave it to the reader to judge which is more "newsworthy" in the case of a conflict that has gone on for a whole generation.

Given an ambiguity that is typical of *all* situations of conflict which are beginning to thaw, nothing is easier than to provoke the subjects of interviews into giving vent to their bitter side. I have seen that happen repeatedly with *Israeli* subjects in the course of a recent venture in making a documentary on the Middle East. Israelis whose names are bywords of moderation were driven by insensitive interviewers into voicing statements much more characteristic of their opponents. (Item: An Israeli "dove" is asked what he thought of the situation after Arafat's UN appearance. He answers, sighing, that the event had a "devastating effect" on the moderate camp in Israel. The interviewer then asks why "so-called" Israeli moderates were so opposed to the PLO when the "whole world" thinks it is a "fine national-liberation" movement. . . . You can imagine the answer of the "dove" and the remainder of the interview.)

I do not know how Miss Peters approached her subjects, but I know how she approached what I wrote; and I have reacted by implicitly associating her with "insensitive" interviewers—which I didn't mean to do.

NADAV SAFRAN
Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I sympathize with Joan Peters's vain attempt to find moderates in Egypt. I, too, went to Cairo in search of preconceived Egyptian peaceniks, counterparts of the Israeli doves. The time was last July when the euphoria following the successful face-to-face Egyptian-Israeli disengagement negotiation at Km. 101 had not yet been dissipated. The Egyptian authorities were welcoming Jewish journalists, even a Zionist editor like me. Peace was in the air, but the question in my mind, and that of my

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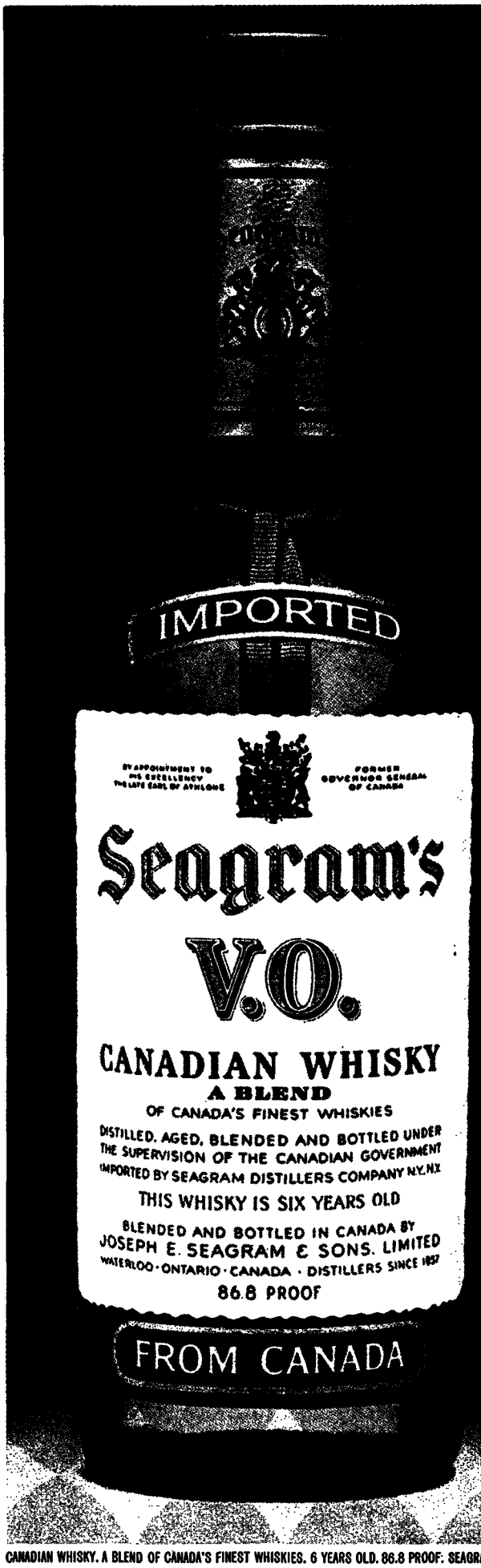
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Israeli friends, was what kind of peace? Would it be a real peace, a peace of friendliness, an actual *sulh*? Were the Egyptian leaders, editors, and intellectuals ready to end a quarter-century of hatred for everything Israeli?

So I went to Cairo, after a month in Israel, to look for peace-lovers, Israeli style. The task I set myself was to search for Egyptians who would agree with expatriate Egyptian writer Sana Hassan that Israel had a moral right to exist: and/or condemn, as did Sana Hassan, the terrorist killing of women and children in Ma'alot and in Kiryat Shmone.

My first interviews in Cairo were with knowledgeable American residents: the political officer of the American embassy; veteran correspondents of the New York *Times*, Reuters, etc. They were too polite to laugh at my preconceived criteria for moderate Egyptians. They knew of no Egyptians who fit either of my criteria.

So I went to see Egyptians—government officials, editors, and leaders of the Egyptian Peace Committee. Sana Hassan, I was told, had been away from Egypt too long and no longer thought like an Egyptian. At that point I could have concluded, like Miss Peters, that the search for an Egyptian moderate was hopeless and gone home. But I found that if I changed my definition, the situation was not entirely hopeless. Egypt desperately needs peace to get out of the economic morass in which Nasser's policies have sunk it. Egyptian leaders from Sadat down understand the vital necessity for peace if they want to survive. The Egyptian Minister of Information, Dr. Kaml Abdul-Magid, told me in a private interview in his office that Egypt must "create an aura of stability which will attract foreign investments."

An aura of stability means an end to the incessant warfare. So Dr. Abdul-Magid, who has made many a violent statement against Israel of the kind listed by Miss Peters in her litany of non-moderates, could be called a moderate, if you define the word, as I came to do, as follows: one who believes that a military solution of the dispute with Israel is impossible and is willing—even anxious—to negotiate and sign an iron-clad peace agreement in return for Sinai.

Sadat and all his officials, including those quoted pejoratively by Miss Peters, meet this definition.

Can Egyptians whose feelings for Israel are those quoted by Miss Peters make a lasting peace? Yes, if they feel they have no alternative. Moshe Dayan and other Israeli hawks have always said that the Arabs will make peace only when they decide that they can never defeat Israel. That time has come as far as the Egyptians are concerned. But Egypt understands that there can be no peace without the Syrians and the Palestinians. As Israeli critics of the recent abortive Kissinger shuttle pointed out: a statement of non-belligerency by Sadat, which is what Israel demanded, would be a worthless piece of paper if Syria decided to go to war. Egypt would then have to join in.

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they have more to gain from peace than war. If Israel plays its cards right—if it stops searching for nonexistent "moderates" and accepts the possibility that peace is possible with non-moderates—there may never be a fifth round, *im yirtze hashem* and *inshallah*.

JESSE ZEL LURIE

New York City

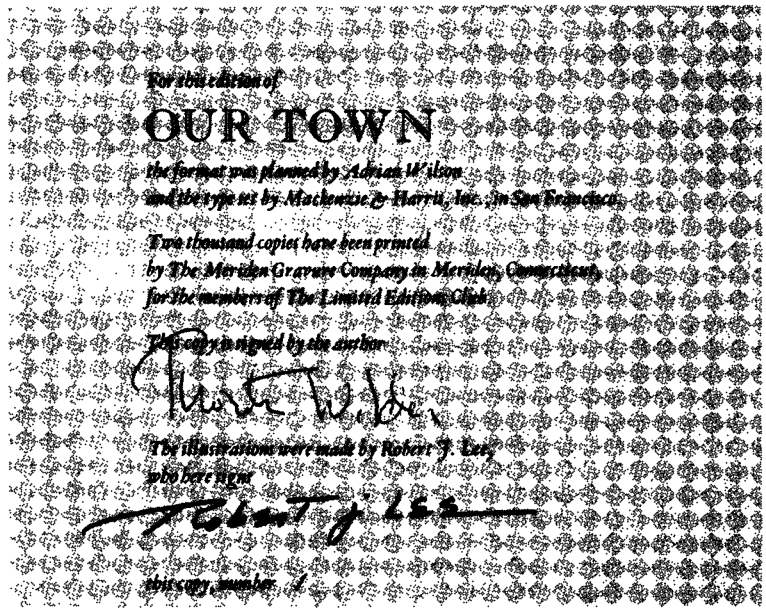
TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Less than two years ago Israelis like Amnon Rubinstein were writing, "There are no more doves in Israel," and the pleas of leftist Israeli intellectuals for international appreciation of Israel's struggle for survival were heard. Today it seems even more commonplace to encounter the thesis that the Arab world is now permeated with "moderates" suddenly desirous of coexistence and eventually of true peace with Israel.

Joan Peters's "In Search of Moderate Egyptians" is a most welcome challenge to this false contemporary wisdom. She is to be commended for the courage to write it as she found it (needless to say, she's not heading back to Cairo soon).

No matter how much all of us want to find a basic change in the overall Arab desire to defeat Israel and bury Zionism, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of such wishful thinking or the self-deception which too many Americans are prone to pursue. Realism remains the approach most likely to safeguard Israeli interests as well as American interests.

When I visited Egypt in 1972 as United Nations Representative of the International Student Movement, I had two basic reactions. First, I was amazed at the charm of Cairo and of so many of the Egyptians I met during my two one-week visits. It being my first visit to the Arab Middle East, I was rather pleasantly surprised by the magnetism of the civilization. But secondly, I found a profound antagonism toward Jews and a determination to fight Israel and "the Zionists" whatever the cost. I spoke with officials of the newly created United Nations Association, with an official of the Youth Department of the Arab Socialist Union, with student leaders of the General Union of Student, and with any English-speaking people I came in contact with. Nowhere was there an acceptance of Israel, pre- or post-1967. A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conflict between civilizations was my impression. And the deeper the conversations, the more profound and intractable the confrontation.

In my conversations here in the United States with Arab students and Third World supporters of the Arab cause, I find an underlying conviction that Israel's destruction is a historical certainty. Thus, short-term "moderation" with the goal of weakening Israel is acceptable—but not as a step to real peace, only as a means of eventual triumph. Coexistence might evolve under such circumstances, it is true, but it should not be mistaken for acceptance of a Jewish state in the Middle East. At best there might be toleration in view of the potential cost of attempting the final destruction. But even then the likelihood of a renewal of warfare would always remain if Israel's strength or her international position were such that further weakening or potential victory were contemplated.

MARK A. BRUZONSKY
Washington, D.C.

JOAN PETERS writes:

Nothing would be more gratifying than to learn that the findings reported in my article were wrong, and that the Egyptians are indeed ready to begin direct peace negotiations with Israel on even a tentative basis. Unfortunately, none of the arguments set forth by Nadav Safran or Jesse Zel Lurie seems to affect the conclusions of my article. Nor do I regard self-delusion as a helpful ploy in this situation; on the contrary, self-deception on the part of knowledgeable and respected observers of the Middle East can create public distortion and become an obstacle to realistic analysis. I wrote candidly of what I saw and heard in Egypt because I believe it is essential to confront the facts, however unpalatable.

Nadav Safran indicates in his letter a certain irritation that my observations in Egypt were so "contrary to" the wistful and nostalgic "impressions" of his most recent return to his native land, recorded in "Conversations in Cairo." Yet Professor Safran himself closes that article on a note of doubt. Upon "closer inspection," he writes, a book he had found in Egypt "turns out to be a scurrilous compendium" of anti-Jewish slanders, and he is led to question the sincerity of the Egyptian friend who had just assured him in "heartfelt words" that the Jewish heritage is held in high esteem by Muslims. Mr. Safran's closing sentence begins, "Which is the real Egypt? . . ." That question is well worth pursuing.

Mr. Safran insinuates that questions I asked during my interviews in Egypt were slanted, or—to use his euphemism—"insensitive." He implies that I may have provoked the subjects into overstating their positions, and suggests that I "approached" them in a manner designed to elicit preconceived answers. None of this is the case. I reported Egyptian attitudes as they were revealed to me; I did not color, perfume, or distort them. Mr. Safran states explicitly that he does not know *how* I "approached" my "subjects"—that is true, he doesn't. As for the "insensitivity" alleged, I pointed out in my article (and the tape recordings of the interviews abundantly corroborate this) that the views I reported, far from being provoked by me, were often intruded vehemently into the conversation, whether relevant or not to the subject at hand. After becoming comfortable in the presence of the tape recorder and the interviewer, and at ease in the assumption that I was not an Egyptian-born Jew, as is Mr. Safran, the people I interviewed volunteered their comments freely. To suggest otherwise, without any substantiation, is unworthy of a scholar of Mr. Safran's stature.

Jesse Zel Lurie expresses apparent surprise that "*even* a Zionist editor" like himself was well-received in Egypt (emphasis added). But in fact, several Egyptians in Cairo confided to me quite candidly that Jewish writers from abroad were being given "special treatment," the purpose being to convince Jews in the Diaspora—especially in the U.S. —that it is Israel, not Egypt, which is standing in the way of "peace," and thereby to erode Israel's support within the world Jewish community. I might incidentally share with Mr. Lurie the half-jesting advice I got belatedly from a friend, a senior diplomat stationed in the Middle East, in a letter which was waiting at home when I returned from Egypt: "Egyptians are now going out of their way to welcome American journalists regardless of religious persuasion, so the only danger is to beware of being completely brainwashed."

Mr. Lurie discloses that he set for himself a heavier task than mine; he was "in search of . . . Egyptian . . . counterparts of the Israeli doves." He found none, and he could find no one in Egypt classifiable as moderate by any definition acceptable to Western observers. So he obligingly changed his definition of "moderate"—which is permissible as a rhetorical exercise so long as one doesn't redefine oneself into self-deception. I sympathize with Mr. Lurie's reluctance to face what would otherwise seem a "hopeless" situation, but he has, I believe, based his new interpretation and his conclusion on a fallacious premise: that many Egyptians are ready to make peace with Israel because they are finally convinced Egypt cannot defeat her militarily. Unfortunately, not all judgments in this conflict are based on rational considerations of this kind. Moreover, there is little if any evidence that the Egyptians are convinced that Egypt will always be defeated on the battlefield. Finally, the Egyptians now seem to believe that Arab wealth and power, in conjunction with diplomatic pressure, and U.S. leverage upon Israel, will enable Egypt, at long last, to achieve its original goals.

And the Egyptians themselves certainly are not acting as if they were without any alternative to peace with Israel; unhappily, the general findings of my article appear to be corroborated all too well by President Sadat's recent statements. Upon announcing the reopening of the Suez Canal last June, for instance, Sadat mentioned that Egypt was constructing three new tunnels under the canal for the purpose of expediting the movement of tanks to the eastern side. He has repeated on several occasions that peace may come only in "another generation"—that there will be no peace in his time—and he has declared in a speech to his own people that Israel, by its very existence, is "a knife thrust into the body of the Arab world." Of such "moderation" too many wars are made.

Culture & Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Thorburn's review of *Popular Culture and High Culture* by Herbert J. Gans [Books in Review, May] failed to make a point it came close to making. . . .

Whether or not Gans (or Mr. Thorburn, for that matter) "sepa-

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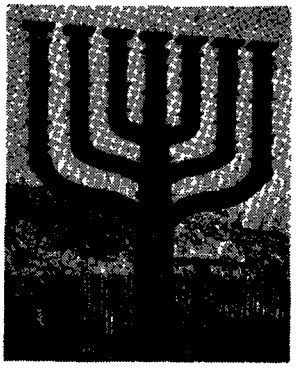

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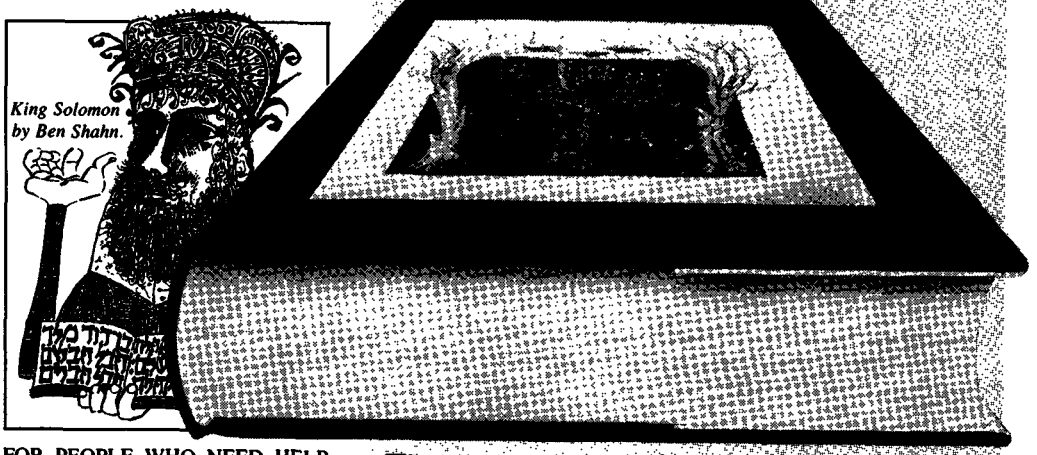

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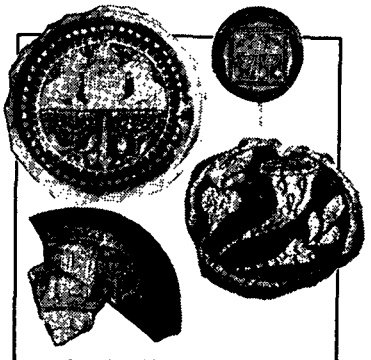

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rates himself from the strict assumptions he sets out to criticize," or "defers to the continuing authority of high culture" would be of little importance to me but for one thing: the power to prescribe. It is necessary to look at Gans's position with some care, as the following sentence from Gans's book, as quoted by Mr. Thorburn, demonstrates: "And while both [high school graduates and college graduates] deserve praise if they read Proust, they should not be expected to, at least not in evaluations that result in public policy."

Public policy! It fair chills the bones, whatever side of the elitist-democratic dichotomy Gans is "really" on. Consider the simple arrogance of Gans's repeated declaration that "all people have the right to the culture they prefer." Didn't Thomas Jefferson observe that this right and even greater ones are *inalienable*? In what sense is Gans now going to guarantee this right with his public policy?

As Mr. Thorburn describes it, sociological research teams ought to be hired to determine by questionnaire and so on what are the cultural needs—maybe even desires—of the various distinguishable audiences in our population. Then by the artful use of governmental muscle, subsidies, and the like, suppliers of culture will be encouraged to put out in the right proportions.

Mr. Thorburn views all this with alarm, but mainly because he (quite rightly) distrusts the possibility of replacing the "unpredictable Muse" by a sociological questionnaire. He also suspects Gans of a greater elitism than Gans pretends to, but of course he can't be certain it will be Gans and his friends who would be conducting the surveys, so this is not quite an objection to the scheme.

But I wish that Mr. Thorburn had more explicitly viewed all this connection between culture and public policy with a more basic alarm, an alarm all of us ought to feel when it is proposed that a government agency start guaranteeing us a right we thought we have had for the past two hundred years.

If we had no surveys, no taxes, and no subsidies relating to the arts, we would have nothing to fear from either the "elitists" (however defined) or the "rabble" (ditto). Not only would all people be entitled to the culture they prefer, they could all go out and buy it in the proportions they fancy, and no one of them need impose his taste on another. The only questionnaire really needed is the turnstile, cheaper to operate, by the way, than a sociological research project, though its manufacture employs few authors of books.

Why must the arts always be economically and politically distinguished from (say) groceries, not only by the priests of high culture, but also by those who attack such priesthoods? Is not food even more essential to our lives than art? By Gans's standards, teams of nutritionists should survey our gastronomic needs, being careful of course not to deride the lovers of hot dogs and sauerkraut, and then arrange public policy (taxes and subsidies, of course) to make sure we get what we want, or at least no less than we ought, considering our education, to want.

Well, there are those who believe this last proposition, but even vigorous advocates of the free market in food often fall victim to the belief that socialism in art at least must be a good thing. It isn't. It's a terrible thing. Instead of pointing this out, Mr. Thorburn mainly argued with Gans about the philosophy the proposed commissioners of culture ought to have.

RALPH A. RAIMI
University of Rochester
Rochester, New York

DAVID THORBURN writes:

Ralph A. Raimi's real quarrel is not with my review, not even with Gans's book, but with governmental intervention in cultural matters. Gans himself, as I indicated perhaps too elliptically in my review, is committed to a cultural pluralism not unlike that described in Mr. Raimi's seventh paragraph, although Gans is less naive than Mr. Raimi, whose vision of a cultural free market strikes me as an unworkable and undesirable fantasy. Whatever the follies of federal, state, and municipal programs for the arts—extravagant as these often are and have been—I do not think it reasonable to conclude that our culture would be enriched, nor anyone's rights extended, by the laissez-faire policy Mr. Raimi proposes. That the turnstiles in museums and concert halls are used far less often than those at sports arenas does not justify eliminating museums and concerts.

All societies, ours included, institutionalize culture in various ways; and all societies, ours included, develop immensely complex strategies whereby certain cultural forms or activities are valorized while others are discouraged and even forbidden. The power to prescribe in the aesthetic as in the moral realm is not limited to government bureaucrats, is not even mainly centered in government. Publishers, broadcasters, the moguls of professional sports, critics, artists, performers, clerics, professors and teachers, even (perhaps especially) parents—all are continually engaged in acts of judgment and prescription concerning the cultural life.

Gans understands this and understands especially how deeply class prejudices affect our attitudes toward culture. I respect this side of his book a good deal, and Mr. Raimi's letter makes me regret that I did not discuss it more fully in my review.

But I do not regret my disagreement with Gans, which I'm certain is not so trivial as Mr. Raimi imagines. Gans wants us to respect the audience for mass or popular culture but cannot bring himself to respect the arts they favor except in relative terms. His position is ultimately not much different from that of the elitist culture-vultures who rarely admit (who probably don't even recognize) that a contempt for many people is inherent in their confident dismissal of most American art. One cannot easily assume the intelligence or good sense of an audience whose aesthetic preferences are said to be vulgar and stupid. As I suggested in my review, the solution to this dilemma is to try to respect *both* the mass audience *and* their aesthetic choices. This is easier to say than to do, of course, because as Gans reminds us in the good half of his argument, many deep-seated prejudices inhibit our efforts to respond freshly and openly to certain forms of popular art.

October 1973

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his otherwise nicely reasoned article, "The United States and Israel" [April], one of Theodore Draper's major premises is entirely wrong. He claims that the U.S. threatened in October 1973 to use American forces to resupply the en-

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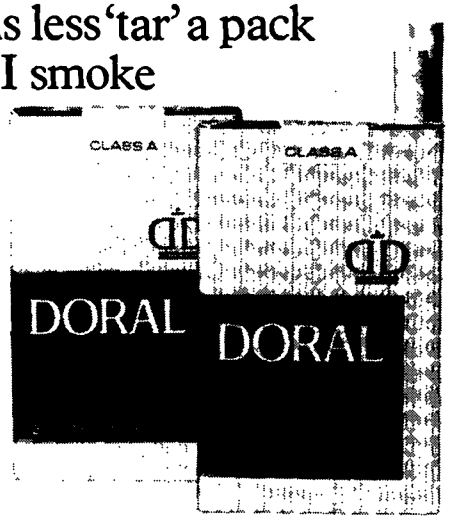

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circled Egyptian Third Army if Israel continued to refuse to open supply routes to Egypt. It was, writes Mr. Draper, "an American 'ultimatum' to use American forces to resupply the Egyptians and to face the Israelis with the prospect of fighting Americans, not a Russian ultimatum to use Russian forces and face the Israelis with the prospect of fighting Russians, that compelled the Israeli government to submit." In fact, the situation was just the reverse. Secretary of State Kissinger told the Israeli government that Russia was threatening to resupply the stranded Egyptians. The extent of Kissinger's threat to the Israelis was his warning that the U.S. would not oppose a Soviet resupply effort if Israel did not voluntarily allow supplies to go through.

Mr. Draper arrives at his wrong premise from some muddy material and a rather startling leap of logic. He quotes from a lecture by Moshe Dayan, establishing that there was indeed a U.S. ultimatum, but leaving unclear its details. He then quotes from a Dayan interview conducted by Terence Smith of the New York *Times* in which Smith asks whether it is true that the U.S. threatened to use its own forces to resupply the Egyptians. Interestingly, though Mr. Draper quotes Dayan's answer in full, the former defense minister did not directly answer Smith's question. Dayan merely says that "The U.S. moved in and denied us the fruits of victory." He does not say how the U.S. did that. But Mr. Draper takes his answer as proof that the U.S. did indeed make a threat to use U.S. forces.

The mystery is easily solved by returning to the text of the Dayan lecture from which Mr. Draper partly quoted. It contains the following paragraph: "They [U.S. officials] said, 'The Soviets say they'll supply the Egyptian Third Army by plane, and the Soviets have a case since you cut off the Third Army on the 22nd of the month when the cease-fire was meant to be in force. We—in this case and on this topic of civilian supply—will not go to war against the Soviets since they want neither to conquer Israel nor to continue the war. We all want to stop the war. They just want to give food to hungry and thirsty people and it's a humanitarian problem.' "

That version of the October events is also the one remembered by Abba Eban, then Israel's foreign minister. I asked him recently about Mr. Draper's premise, and Eban said: "The idea that the U.S. was going to supply the Egyptian Third Army seems to me bizarre. It is quite drastic enough that the Soviets would supply them and the U.S. would not be able to interpose itself. That in itself is a rather drastic thing." This also, by the way, is the version offered by the London Sunday *Times* Insight Team's *Yom Kippur War*, the best and most complete book so far published about the war.

I checked with Terence Smith about the source of his question to Dayan. Smith recalls that the thrust of his questioning was centered on Soviet intentions and he notes that his next question, as quoted by Mr. Draper, is about whether the Soviets really would have intervened. Most likely the origin of the tale of an American threat to use U.S. forces lies with the Jerusalem *Post*, an English-language daily newspaper. Toward the end of a story on Dayan's lecture, the *Post* claimed that Dayan had made such a charge. As a text of the lecture, which was recorded and later transcribed, shows, however, Dayan made no such charge.

DONALD NEFF
Time-Life News Service
Jerusalem, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Can we, through a NATO-type treaty with Israel, truly deter a war? This is the crux of the question posed by Theodore Draper in his article. The objections to such a treaty are obvious: if the Israelis had nuclear weapons, they could deter Arab attacks anyway, and so our help would be superfluous; since NATO itself is disintegrating, such an arrangement with Israel would be archaic; since America has failed to deter Communist aggression in Indochina, we should similarly fail to deter Arab aggression in the Middle East; since Soviet troops might land in, say, Syria, we should not dare invade that country and so our deterrence would lack credibility; since Israel's lack of faith in American commitments has already hampered Kissinger's step-by-step approach, the question of American reliability would remain, even with a NATO-type arrangement, and that too would destroy the credibility of our deterrence; and since NATO-type arrangements rest ultimately on the threat of nuclear retaliation, we should, by extending such an agreement to Israel, be threatening just what we want to avoid—nuclear war.

None of these objections, however, is necessarily valid. *Israel's nuclear potential*: Israel's nuclear weapons would be at most few and at best vulnerable; America's nuclear weapons are many and relatively invulnerable. Our help, therefore, would not be superfluous.

NATO's disintegration: If NATO is indeed falling apart, this is so because of problems unique to given countries (e.g., Cyprus) and because the Europeans' fear of the Soviet Union has lessened. But Israel is not divided like Cyprus, and the Israelis still do fear their enemy.

The Indochina parallel: This is a spurious argument. Because of differences in topography and because they lack the support of the population the Vietcong enjoyed in Indochina, the Arabs could not conduct successful guerrilla warfare in Israel; because they face not a corrupt and fragmented government, as did the Vietnamese Communists, but a united and determined people, the Arabs could not win a political victory in Israel.

The Soviet presence: Even if the Soviets did have a few divisions in, say, Syria, we could still deter a Syrian attack upon Israel. If the Russians were stationed beyond the Syrian-Israeli border, we could chase the Syrians back across the intervening strip, stopping short of the Russian positions. If the Russians were stationed right against the border, they would surely hesitate to join the Syrian invaders, because that would mean actually fighting Americans. And so we could quickly contain and destroy the Syrian invaders.

American credibility: Because the Israelis think we value oil as much as we do Israel, and because of the ambiguities of our present policy, they have scant faith in our pledges of support. But we could probably solve this problem by stating our commitment clearly and by doing what we should be doing anyway: devising a series of policies to show Arab oil producers that we can do without their oil.

The danger of war: A NATO-type treaty with Israel may well present risks. But the situation is already risky. . . . And the paradox of deterrence has always been that you must threaten war credibly to prevent war.

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But the question that troubles Mr. Draper most still remains: just how would this deterrence work? To what, in fact, he wants to know, would the United States be committing itself? "If the guarantee were embodied in a formal treaty . . . ," he writes, "the commitment would be most uncertain and ill-defined unless it specifically detailed 'what steps would be taken under what circumstances.'" He fears we could not now negotiate such a treaty or get it through the Congress—partly because "one nagging question . . . would inevitably arise and hold up an American decision—who was the aggressor?" And even if we did have such a treaty, Mr. Draper argues, it would probably be ineffective. . . .

Mr. Draper's argument, however, is weak. A formal treaty could indeed specify "what steps would be taken under what circumstances": the NATO treaty does just that, pledging all signatories to "use armed force in resisting . . . an armed attack on the territory of any of them . . ." (admittedly the NATO treaty fails to define "resisting"—but that allows for the flexibility of response that can make deterrence credible). Such a treaty might well be negotiable with Israel and might well pass through the Congress—we cannot dismiss these possibilities before the fact. (And defining the "aggressor" is straightforward—it is he who attacks the territory of Israel—and the fact that the Soviets and the Arabs, as they did in 1973, call Israel the aggressor even if attacked is irrelevant to an understanding of that definition.) This leaves, then, the question of the effectiveness of such a treaty. Now speed is indeed essential to the success of such a guarantee, and so I am suggesting not just a token American force in Israel but rather a large force, comparable to our military establishment in West Germany. This, Mr. Draper says, makes one shudder. Perhaps it does—but so does the thought of another war in the Middle East.

For a NATO-type treaty with Israel could let us grapple, for the first time, with the crucial causes of tension in the Middle East: Israel's fears of the Arabs, the Arabs' fears of Israel, and the revanchism of the Palestinians. Because of the vast power America could muster, it could deter Arab attacks on Israel; because the Arabs then (even with Soviet support) would probably not launch a major attack against Israel, the Israelis would have little need to launch a preemptive war against the Arabs; and because it would give Israel a new sense of security, the Israelis could dare withdraw to some or all of their pre-1967 borders—so reducing Arab fears of Israel and, possibly, satisfying part of the Palestinians' demands.

Such an alliance, furthermore, need not exclude all other approaches to a Middle Eastern peace. We could still hold a conference at Geneva, just as the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries have been holding a European Security Conference; we could still ask the Soviets to help in controlling the conflict; we could still use the relevant UN resolutions to describe and legitimate a final settlement; and we could still extend some satisfaction to the Palestinians.

The costs and risks of an American NATO-type guarantee to Israel are, in short, surely no greater than those we face right now. As it has in Europe (and Korea), such a treaty could create a sense of security and so lead to an ultimate reduction of tensions.

ROBERT S. THOMPSON
University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

THEODORE DRAPER writes:

Donald Neff has raised a serious question, and I have tried to reexamine the entire issue with the resources at my disposal. The point is important enough for a better understanding of both the past and possibly the present to deserve a full inquiry.

As Mr. Neff suspects, I was influenced by the report of Moshe Dayan's lecture in the Jerusalem *Post*. "It was the Americans, Dayan said," according to this report, "who prevented Israel from making the most of its victory over the [Egyptian] Third Army by threatening to send food by American helicopters if Israel did not allow supplies into the encircled enemy's positions."

This should be enough to show that I did not invent this story out of nothing.

Terence Smith brought up the same story in his interview with Dayan. Mr. Neff says that "the former defense minister did not directly answer Smith's question." A better way of putting it is that Dayan did not deny the allegation in Smith's question, when a denial was called for. Here is the exchange at this point:

> *Smith:* In a recent lecture, you charged that the United States threatened in October 1973 to fly supplies in to relieve the encircled Egyptian Third Army if Israel refused to allow food and water through the lines. What actually happened there?
>
> *Dayan:* The U.S. moved in and denied us the fruits of the victory. It was an ultimatum—nothing short of it. Had the United States not pressed us, the Third Army and Suez City would have had to surrender, etc. [see p. 30 of my article for the entire passage].

Smith's questioning here centered on *American* intentions. Moreover, Dayan referred to an American "ultimatum." "Ultimatum" is a very strong word. It would hardly apply if, as Mr. Neff claims, "Kissinger's threat" merely referred to a Soviet resupply effort which the United States would not oppose. It seemed far more likely to refer to some form of more direct American pressure.

Puzzled by the apparent discrepancies, however, I asked Lea Ben Dor, the editor of the Jerusalem *Post*, to check up on the original story. She has consulted both the original transcript and Mr. Dayan.

The mystery is not easily solved by returning to the text of the Dayan lecture, as Mr. Neff claims. In fact, the mystery deepens. Miss Ben Dor has sent me a literal translation of a key passage in the lecture:

> What the Americans said to us was no more nor less than this: If you don't allow the Third Army to receive civilian supplies—not military—food and water that is; and if you either kill them or force them to surrender, then we, the United States, will send our planes, our helicopters, to bring them supplies, and you will be in trouble with us.

I cannot explain why Mr. Neff and Miss Ben Dor found such different passages in the same transcript. Perhaps Mr. Neff will be better able to clear up this mystery.

Whatever the solution to this puzzle may be, Mr. Neff's version—which involved Soviet rather than American planes—cannot be so easily dismissed. In a recent conversation with Miss Ben Dor, Mr. Dayan gave the following version of what he said in his lecture: "Just

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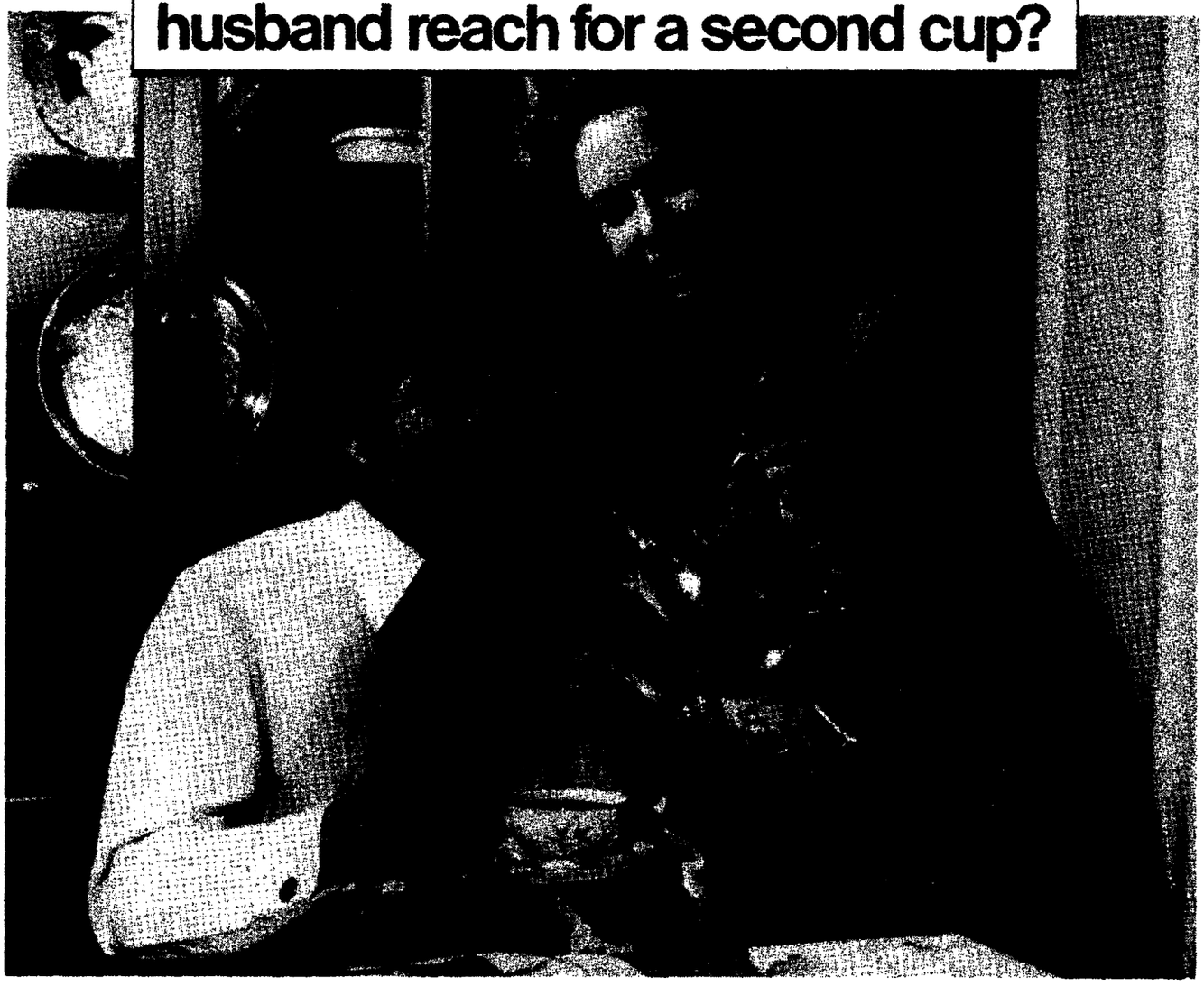
Wouldn't you like to see your husband reach for a second cup?



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after the last days of the war, when the Third Army was on the point of collapse, the Americans threatened us. They said that if we did not allow the Egyptians to get food and water, and forced them to surrender, then they would dissociate themselves from us." Dayan, who spoke in Hebrew, used the English word, "dissociate," to indicate that Kissinger had actually used it.

In addition, Dayan explained to her: "You know what Kissinger said to us: 'What will you do if the Russians paint helicopters white and write UN on them and send them in to supply the Third Army? Will you shoot them down and start World War III?' We never heard anything directly from the Russians about it."

In a previous conversation, Dayan had said: "I don't believe for a moment that the Russians ever threatened anything of the sort. I think it is the kind of speculation Kissinger brings up on occasion."

Let us now recall the main issue. In my article, I came to the conclusion, after a survey of the available evidence, that it had been American pressure which had forced the Israeli government to submit to the release of the Egyptian Third Army. The question now is what kind of pressure was used by Dr. Kissinger: If it was not the use of "American forces to resupply the Egyptians," what was it? Was it merely, as Mr. Neff tells us, that Dr. Kissinger threatened "that the U.S. would not oppose a Soviet resupply effort if Israel did not voluntarily allow supplies to go through"? Or was there more?

If we may trust Dayan either way, there was more, much more. Kissinger threatened either to use American forces or to "dissociate" the United States from Israel if Israel did not do as he demanded. "Dissociation" at that moment, when Israel still desperately needed American supplies, implied much more for the present and future of U.S.-Israel relations than Mr. Neff would have us believe. Moreover, Dayan did not think that the Soviets were going to send their own forces into the area to rescue the Egyptian Third Army. Mr. Neff seems to believe that the American threat was wholly negative—not to oppose a Soviet resupply effort. In fact, the American threat of "dissociation," if that is what it was, was far more positive and did not necessarily depend on a Soviet move of this kind.

More recently, Dayan has been even more explicit. On July 24 last, he spoke at Kibbutz Givat Brenner and—again according to a report in the Jerusalem *Post*—"pointed out that the U.S. had threatened to withdraw its support during the Yom Kippur War unless Israel lifted the siege of the Egyptian Third Army. That information, he noted, had just been released by the censor for use in the former defense minister's forthcoming book." I am now inclined to believe that this is essentally what Dr. Kissinger threatened to do to Israel to obtain its submission.

In one sense, the American pressure conceivably went even farther than I had originally understood. Cutting off Israel from all American supplies at a moment of desperate need could have been a more extreme threat than that of using American forces to save a portion of the Egyptian army.

But we do not have to wait for Dayan's book for more light on this episode. Mohammed Heikal, the well-known former editor of *Al-Ahram* and former Egyptian minister of information, recently published his own book, *The Road to Ramadan,* in London (Collins). In it he gives the text of a message sent by Nixon to Sadat on October 24, 1973:

> Immediately on receipt of your message I instructed Secretary of State Kissinger to make urgent representations to the Israelis that the continutation of offensive military operations will have *most serious consequences for the future of United States-Israel relations.* The Israeli government have replied that the attacks are being initiated by the Egyptian Third Army, that Israeli forces are on the defensive and have been ordered only to fire back if attacked. From here the true facts are impossible to determine. I want to assure you that the United States is unalterably opposed to offensive military actions by Israel and *is prepared to take effective steps to end them.* In the meantime you should ensure that all military action by your forces is also stopped. Secretary Kissinger is getting in touch with Mr. Ismail later today about the possibility of direct talks between our two sides about postwar diplomacy [p. 251, emphasis added].

There was nothing in this message implying that all the United States did was to tell the Israelis that the Americans would not stop the Soviets from saving the Egyptian force. Heikal tells us that the Egyptians appealed to the Americans, not to the Russians. Nixon's reply suggests that he was ready to do anything he thought necessary to satisfy the Egyptian demand.

In fact, Heikal asserts that "there was not on this day [October 24, 1973]—nor any other day, for that matter—any suggestion by us or the Syrians that the Russians should move their forces into the area" (p. 251). He gives a plausible explanation for the mistaken American impression that the Soviets were preparing to intervene by force in the area (pp. 253-254). In any case, it is clear that Mr. Nixon and Dr. Kissinger were determined to rescue the Egyptian Third Army whatever the Soviets did or did not do.

I conclude, therefore, that on the essential point—that it was American, not Soviet, pressure which compelled the Israeli government to submit—I was substantially correct. What Mr. Nixon would have done to take more "effective steps" to obtain compliance by Israel if Dr. Kissinger's threat of "dissociation" had not been sufficient can only be guessed at. In view of Mr. Nixon's record for drastic and dramatic action by American military forces, something more than "dissociation" cannot be ruled out.

Mr. Neff has been kind enough to call my article "nicely reasoned." I hope that he would agree with me that a revision in our understanding of just what kind of American pressure was used does not essentially change the reasoning in the rest of my article.

Robert S. Thompson is mistaken if he thinks that the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 provides for automatic and immediate U.S. response. He has quoted from Article 5 of the treaty. But Article 11 was deliberately put in, at U.S. insistence, to provide for Congressional approval: "This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes." In any case, I cannot take seriously a view which regards America's nuclear weapons as part of "our help" to Israel and contemplates using American troops to chase the Syrians right up to "the Russian positions."

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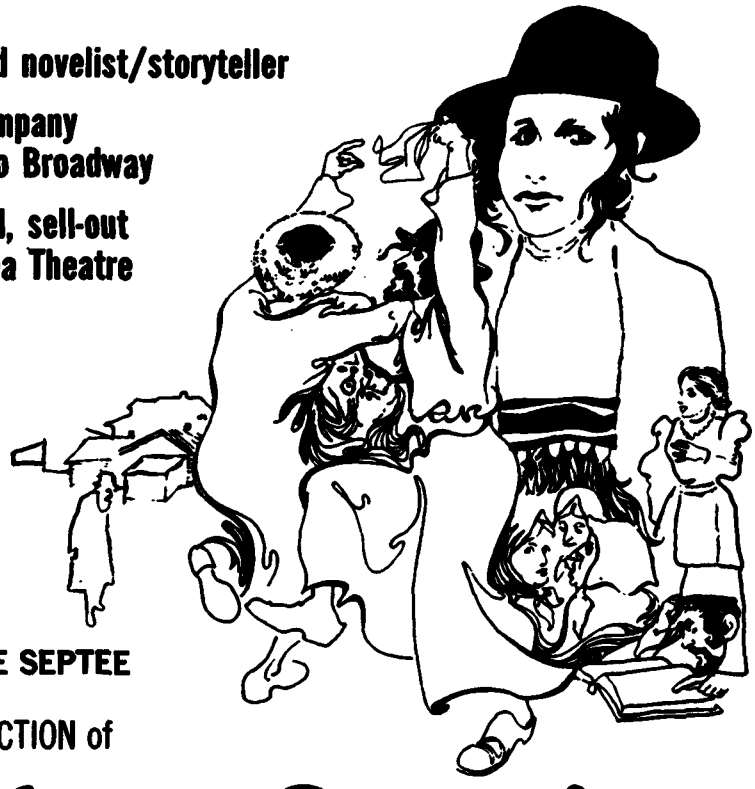

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Egalitarianism & International Politics

Robert W. Tucker

I

THAT the attitudes of Western liberal intellectual elites toward international inequalities have altered, and—on the surface at least—quite markedly so, is by now a commonplace. Indeed, so apparently pervasive has this alteration been that the articulate few who do not share it are seen as eccentric, if not perverse. Yet until only very recently an outlook now considered virtually incontestable would itself have been viewed as eccentric. Writing of the sudden awareness of the "world poverty problem" and of the emergent conviction of a "collective responsibility" on the part of the rich nations for alleviating the plight of the world's poor, Gunnar Myrdal declares that "we have been living through one of history's most abrupt reversals of political climate."* Myrdal associates this reversal not only with elite opinion but with public opinion generally in the Western nations. In fact, there is little evidence for asserting so broad an association and a good deal of evidence that points to a quite different conclusion. At the same time, it is apparent that among the regnant intellectual elites of the developed and capitalist states of the West we have been witnessing a change in attitude that for the time being at least is extraordinary. A new political sensibility has arisen with respect to international inequalities of income and wealth. Provided it were to persist, and eventually extend to publics and governments, the consequences could be momentous.

The origins of the new political sensibility may be traced back to the years of the middle to late 1960's. It is in this period that liberal intellectual elites in the West become increasingly preoccupied, in a way they had not been preoccupied before, with the issue of international inequalities of income and wealth (it is in the same period that they become increasingly preoccupied with domestic inequalities of income and wealth). And it is in this period that the conviction develops of a duty on the part of the rich nations to reduce such inequalities. Those who, like Myrdal, find the "new idea of collective responsibility" emerging in the years following World War II have taken the exhortations of no more than a handful for what was only later to become a substantial group and an increasingly pervasive intellectual climate.

There are of course elements of continuity between these earlier years and the period of interest here. Nevertheless, the elements of continuity are clearly outweighed by the elements of change. In its emphasis on equality as the principal moral imperative of our time,† in its insistence on the duty of the rich to redress global inequalities,** and in its conviction that inequalities of income and wealth represent the most serious long-term threat to world peace, the new political sensibility may be distinguished from views that prevailed during the years of the classic cold war. Whereas earlier views were inevitably influenced by the hegemonic conflict and the security-power necessities it imposed or, at any rate, was thought at the time to impose, the new political sensibility is clearly a post-cold-war outlook. It is so in the narrow and literal sense of regarding the hegemonic rivalry that once dominated world politics as largely spent (and, to the degree that rivalry persists, as no longer of central significance). It is so in the broader sense of seeing the cold war as a response to forces which even at the time had become increasingly atavistic and which certainly no longer accurately characterize the international scene. The period of the cold war, then, was the last great manifestation of the old politics with its parochial interests, its obsession with national power, its hierarchical ordering of states, and its reliance

ROBERT W. TUCKER, professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins, here continues the discussion inaugurated in his article, "A New International Order?" (February). Professor Tucker's books include *A New Isolationism: Threat or Promise?* and *The Radical Left and American Foreign Policy.*

* Gunnar Myrdal, "The World Poverty Problem," *Britannica Book of the Year 1972*, p. 22.

† Zbigniew Brzezinski finds that "equality is becoming the most powerful moral imperative of our time, thus paralleling the appeal of the concept of liberty during the 19th century." So, too, he finds that "the problem of the less developed nations is the moral problem of our time." "U.S. Foreign Policy: The Search for Focus," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1973, pp. 717, 726.

** "The developed nations . . . must do more to promote a least minimal equity in the distribution of wealth among nations." Robert S. McNamara, Address to the Board of Governors, the World Bank, September 25, 1972.

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on forcible methods. By contrast, the new political sensibility proclaims a politics of interdependence for a world that must cope with problems the nature and dimensions of which will no longer yield to the particularistic methods of the past, and surely not to the forcible methods of the past. In place of a world in which the hierarchical ordering of states seemed natural and inevitable, interdependence holds out the promise—as another sanguine analyst puts it—of "a world in which nobody is in charge."

Although it is apparent that the rise of the new political sensibility is a response to the decline of the cold war, it is equally apparent that this outlook must be traced to the disappointment bordering on despair over the results of development strategies and projections confidently set forth in the 1950's and early 1960's. With few exceptions, these optimistic projections did not materialize, though for reasons—the rapid growth of population apart—which are still a matter of dispute. Of relevance here is that a growing despair over achieving the goal of converging per-capita growth rates coincided in the early 1970's not only with an increased militance on the part of the new states but with the new-found concern in the West that the process of industrial growth itself was no longer to be taken for granted, whether because of the constraints imposed by limited natural resources or because of the constraints imposed by the growth process itself in the various forms of pollution.

Thus what had once been seen as a story that would have in the not too distant future a happy ending for the new states, and that would involve only the mildest of sacrifice—if sacrifice at all—on the part of the developed states, was suddenly seen as a story that might have a very unhappy ending indeed, and not only for the poor countries. The most striking presentation of the dark night that all too likely awaits us has been made by Robert Heilbroner in *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect*. In Heilbroner's words, "whether we are unable to sustain growth or unable to tolerate it, there can be no doubt that a radically different future beckons." That future does not portend cooperation but rather intense conflict between the rich and the poor of the world. "We are entering a period," Heilbroner concludes, "in which rapid population growth, the presence of obliterative weapons, and dwindling resources will bring international tensions to dangerous levels for an extended period. Indeed, there seems no reason for these levels of danger to subside unless population equilibrium is achieved and some rough measure of equity reached in the distribution of wealth among nations, either by great increase in the output of the underdeveloped world or by a massive redistribution of wealth from the richer to the poorer lands." Little in the Heilbroner analysis suggests the likelihood of reaching such an equitable arrangement by either route. On the contrary, given the world he projects, the state, both in the developed and underdeveloped worlds, must be expected to exhibit more separatist and self-centered behavior than in the past.

If the Heilbroner assessment—and similar assessments—form one reaction to a world divided between rich and poor, and confronted with the twin prospects of resource scarcities and pollution as limits to growth, the new political sensibility may be seen as another and, on the face of it, altogether different reaction. Whereas the Heilbroner assessment points to increased conflict between rich and poor, to "wars of redistribution" or "preemptive seizures," the new political sensibility emphasizes the prospect—indeed, the necessity—for greater cooperation among nations precisely because of the dangers that confront them all if they do not acknowledge their interdependence through cooperative arrangements which, among other things, must clearly reduce present disparities in standards of living. To Heilbroner such arrangements appear very unlikely, given human nature and the behavior of collectives; at least they appear unlikely in the absence of catastrophe—whether social or natural—which would force us to mend our present ways. The new political sensibility, however, finds in these alternatives to interdependence precisely the incentives required to effect needed change. Thus what are for Heilbroner despotic forces—above all, the despotism of the industrial mode of production—relentlessly driving us ever closer to perdition, are to the new political sensibility benevolently despotic forces which will ultimately lead—and are leading—humanity to true community.

II

It is seldom possible to delineate with precision an outlook that is both novel and still emergent. Even so, a number of the features characteristic of this outlook are reasonably clear. The new political sensibility proceeds from the acute awareness of a condition that is considered at once politically dangerous and morally intolerable. It would be tedious to cite expressions of this conviction. Suffice it to say that the conviction of the political and moral hazards presumably inherent in an interdependent world that remains sharply divided between rich and poor has attained the status almost of a received truth.

To be sure, this does not prevent a substantial measure of disagreement among the adherents of this received truth, who, if on the whole of broadly liberal persuasion, still represent considerable diversity of view. The absence of consensus over the scope of the duty to reduce present disparities in income and wealth clearly does not extend, though, to the point of principle itself, that is,

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to the point of questioning whether there is in principle a duty of the rich to reduce such disparities, even though the fulfillment of this duty will require sacrifice. Still less does it extend to what is commonly taken as the core meaning of the duty the rich have toward the poor, which is to insure minimal subsistence to all. That those who have should share with those who have not is considered unchallengeable.*

The new political sensibility accordingly proclaims a collective responsibility of universal application that heretofore has been applied only within the state and then only in this century (and in the United States only in this generation). In doing so, a parallel is drawn between the growth of equality within the domestic societies of the West and the greater society of states. On this view, what we are witnessing in international society is a historical development that, in its broad outlines, we have already experienced in domestic societies. In a world that becomes increasingly interdependent with each passing day, and that is no longer divided between the subjects of history and those who until recently were its mere objects, the processes which have characterized the internal development of the more advanced societies cannot be contained at the boundaries of the state. Some years ago an international jurist articulated the parallel that has come to form a central tenet of the new political sensibility:

> A clear parallel can be drawn between the sociological development of the international and the national community. . . . Between the national and the international process of democracy there exists a connection. It is no mere accident that, after the supremacy and hegemony of the Western world, universalism in the community of nations was accepted once the process of democratization had been completed in the Western democracies.†

It is not difficult to see why this parallel has proved attractive. It responds to the persuasion of the "spill-over" effects of advanced societies, that is, to the presumed tendency of such societies to project abroad their deeper tendencies at home. Thus a society that moves toward greater internal equality will, on this view, eventually move toward the goal of greater equality abroad. This will be so particularly in an increasingly interdependent world yet one in which the disparity between the conditions of domestic and international life is both marked and apparent. Then too, the parallel drawn between domestic and international society is found to draw considerable support from recent history. Although the formal inequalities endemic to the traditional international system have not altogether disappeared, they are no more than vestiges of an order that today has lost almost all semblance of legitimacy. Even if it is argued that in a number of respects a *de facto* colonialism persists, the point remains—and it is an all important one—that as a *de jure* institution colonialism has passed into history.

In the extension of statehood to peoples formerly held outside the system, in the steady abandonment of formal inequalities of status among those comprising the system, and in the growing restraints placed upon the use of power, the international society of today is seen as scarcely resembling the international society of only yesterday. An emergent political equality has been attended by the rising demand for a greater measure of protection for the economic interests of the new states and, finally, for a greater measure of economic equality. Reflecting the development of the more influential domestic societies, the conclusion seems only reasonable that "the world community is bound to become a welfare community, just as the nation state became a welfare state."**

III

It is often assumed that there is a marked affinity between the new political sensibility entertained in the West today and the new egalitarianism entertained by the elites of the new states. In one sense this assumption is evidently well-taken, for both look to a significant shift—or redistribution—of income and wealth. Yet it is perhaps only in this sense that the assumption is well-taken. In other respects, the world projected by the new political sensibility is very different from that projected by the new egalitarianism. The latter does not confuse

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* The opening words of the above sentence are a paraphrase of the often-quoted sentence that appeared in the report of the Pearson Commission: "The simplest answer to the question [why the rich should concern themselves with the plight of the poor] is the moral one: that it is only right for those who have to share with those who have not." *Partners in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development*, 1969, p. 8. A stimulating review and analysis of this and similar expressions is found in Theodore A. Sumberg, *Foreign Aid as Moral Obligation*, The Washington Papers I, 1973.

† B.V.A. Röling, *International Law in an Expanded World*, 1960, p. 56. Thus Röling sees international law proceeding from the law of freedom to the law of protection to the law of welfare (and beyond this, to the law of social and economic planning).

** Röling, *op. cit.* In 1971 Barbara Ward expressed confidence that the rich countries, "having accepted the principle of 'the general welfare' at home, . . . were ready to apply it to the whole family of man." *The Widening Gap*, 1971, p. 13. A 1972 Brookings Institution reassessment of international economic relations declared: "The same motivation that leads the more advanced regions within a country to alleviate poverty in the less advanced may well be extended to the far deeper disparities that exist among different regions of the world." *A Tripartite Report by Thirteen Experts*, 1972, p. 4.

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a global redistribution of income and wealth with a "new beginning" in history when this redistribution is to be largely effected by, and in the name of, states. The shift in power expected to attend a shift in wealth is not identified with a change in the "essence" of power, just as a sought-after change in the present international hierarchy is not mistaken for the disappearance of hierarchy. Interdependence is not seen as a means for drawing the sharp teeth of sovereignty but as an opportunity for obtaining maximum concessions from the developed states.

In a word, it is not the essential structure of the international system that the new egalitarianism has challenged, but the distribution of wealth and power within this system. Viewed from one perspective, this challenge may seem revolutionary, as indeed it is. Viewed from another and yet more profound perspective, this challenge appears altogether traditional. Whatever the view we may take toward the demands the new states have addressed to the industrialized states, in dealing with those demands for greater equality we are at least standing on familiar terrain.

THE nature of the indictment the underdeveloped states have brought against the present international order has been examined on so many occasions that it need not be detailed once again here. The crux of this indictment concerns not only the disparity of benefits the present order presumably confers as between the developed and underdeveloped countries, but the way in which these disparities are seen to have been created and the manner in which they are even today sustained. A colonial past, based upon force, gave rise to present disparities. A neocolonialism, even when no longer based upon force, perpetuates these disparities by virtue of the overwhelming advantages conferred by an unjust history.

Thus formal independence and an unexpected measure of political equality have only served to sharpen the demand for what is presumably "real" independence, that is, economic independence. But economic independence, and in consequence a new and vital dimension of equality, can only be achieved once the backward of the world enjoy a level of economic and social development which begins to approximate that enjoyed by the industrial countries. On this view, inequality does not inhere simply in a disparity of power *per se*, but in a particular form of disparity. It is not the disparity of the strong and the weak, for this is an inequality inherent in the very nature of the state system, but the radical disparities in levels of development that give rise to a special kind of inequality.

It is the same disparities which, more than anything else, give rise to a sense of humiliation and of resentment more potent than the sense of injustice bred by normal disparities of power. Even if Thucydides is right in saying that justice is possible only between equals (in power), there remains the argument that a special kind of injustice arises between unequals who are also at different stages of economic and social development. To sympathetic liberal elites in the West, the injustice of the international system is to be found in present disparities in living (consumption) standards and, above all, in the extreme poverty endured by almost one-third of the world's peoples. To the elites of the developing states, whatever their resentment over present disparities in living standards, the essential injustice of the international system is to be found in the very condition of collective backwardness and in the special vulnerabilities felt to result from this condition. The deeper significance of the need for economic growth is explained by one observer in these words:

> The need for economic growth in a developing country has few if any economic springs. It arises from a desire to assume full human status by taking part in an industrial civilization, participation in which *alone* enables a nation or an individual to compel others to treat it as an equal. Inability to take part in it makes a nation militarily powerless against its neighbors, administratively unable to control its own citizens, and culturally incapable of speaking the international language. Pre-industrial man is human, in the modern world, only in a latent sense, by courtesy.*

It is not individual inequality, then, that forms the gravamen of the indictment brought by the new egalitarianism against the present order, but collective inequality, and above all the inequality of states at very different stages of development. The point cannot be emphasized too strongly, given the propensity of Western observers to view "global inequality" primarily in terms of individual disparities of income and wealth, thereby implying that in dealing with this issue we are in effect dealing with a familiar issue of domestic justice, though in this instance writ large. Instead, we are dealing with a quite different issue and one that may bear only limited resemblance to the issue of domestic justice. The greater measure of collective equality the new states demand, and may eventually obtain, does not insure a greater measure of individual equality. It is OPEC's founding state, Venezuela, that has provided a striking demonstration of what the fruits of the new equality may mean—or rather not mean—for greater internal equity of distribution. In the new egalitarianism, states are both the agents and subjects of equality, just as they are the agents and subjects of justice generally. If the claim to a greater measure of collec-

* Ernest Gellner, "Scale and Nation," in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 3, 1973, pp. 15-16.

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tive equality is made in the name of international justice, the domestic purposes to which this equality may be put are nevertheless largely beyond the purview of that justice. And they are so because the state is the moral unit around which center claims for equality, just as the state is the moral unit which is held to endow these claims with legitimacy.

IV

THE moral basis of the claims the new egalitarianism has addressed to the developed countries reflects the way in which present inequalities are seen to have arisen. If the division of the world into the developed and the underdeveloped is largely the result of a system that for so long deprived the underdeveloped of their independence, obstructed their path toward development, and denied them the true value of their rightful inheritance (natural resources), then the moral basis for claims to resource transfers today—whatever the forms these transfers may take—is apparent. Though given a variety of expression, the principle of justice invoked in support of these claims is one of reparations for past wrongs. In many respects, moreover, an exploitative "past" is found to have persisted into the present. Thus the OPEC states have sought in part to justify their recent actions by pointing to the history of the past twenty-five years, a history that is interpreted in such a way as to entitle them today to what is in effect a form of reparations. This is, for example, the well-known view of the Shah of Iran, who finds the present prosperity of Europe and Japan to be based on a generation of cheap fuel.* In the 1974 United Nations Declaration on the Establishment of a New Economic Order, the theme of reparations, though never directly alluded to, forms the pervasive justification for a new equality that appears to entail as many duties for the developed states as it does rights for the underdeveloped states.

On occasion, it is true, the demand for greater equality is placed on a very different moral basis. The obligation of the rich countries to assist the underdeveloped, and particularly the very poor, states has been expressed in terms of a larger and common good that finds its ultimate expression in the sense of a shared humanity. Yet however attractive may be the appeal to Western elites of a solidarity that transcends the confines of the state, that appeal can have little attractiveness to elites of most of the new states. For the latter, it is not the vision of a sudden (and qualitative) extension of sympathy culminating in a shared humanity that will facilitate the ordeal of rapid development, but the vision of a far more limited solidarity that is at once given tangible expression by and enforcement through the state.

The vision of a shared humanity is one thing for those who have long enjoyed the sense of status and worth that is largely conferred, for better or worse, by the independent state. It is quite another thing for those who have only recently achieved collective independence and whose sense of status and hunger for recognition as equals are still far from appeased. Similarly, it is one thing for those who have long played a salient role in history, largely by virtue of having achieved that independence and solidarity for which the state has been indispensable, to invoke today the imperative of human solidarity. It is quite another thing for peoples who have been the objects of history rather than its subjects to respond to this imperative. Before those who have only recently, and then with uncertainty, entered history can proceed to the stage of mankind, they must first pass through the stage of the state.

The appeal to a shared humanity (or to human solidarity, the brotherhood of man, etc.) not only places primary emphasis on the individual, and on individual equality, an emphasis that, as already observed, can have but limited attraction to the new states, it also suggests that the response to demands for greater economic equality is, after all, in the nature of a concession on the part of the developed states. This concession may be couched in terms of duty, but whatever the precise moral formulation, there will remain the psychological reality of a concession which can only confirm for the recipient a sense of inequality. It may be argued that resource transfers, though taking the form of reparations, must also be seen by the new and underdeveloped states as a concession. Even so, such transfers are a concession that more readily preserves the sense—or the illusion—of equality, in that reparations are not something merely given but something given back that was unjustly taken in the first place. The claim to resource transfers as a form of reparations suggests an equality which might have been had it not been for the depredations of the now rich. It represents the hardest possible "moral bargain" that the poor can strike.

* This claim has found a responsive echo in the West. Geoffrey Barraclough writes that "the virtually continuous economic growth among the industrial nations of the West since the early 1950's was subsidized, and probably made possible, by the oil-producing countries." "The Great World Depression I," *New York Review of Books*, January 23, 1975, p. 22. Barraclough cites approvingly the Shah's remarks as well as the much quoted comment of Giscard d'Estaing that in the oil crisis we are witnessing "the revenge on Europe for the 19th century" (and, apparently, the mid-20th century as well). In a more recent essay, "Wealth and Power: The Politics of Oil and Food" (*ibid.*, August 7, 1975, p. 30), Barraclough ostensibly dismisses the reparations argument by declaring that: "It is not so much wrong as irrelevant. The West has as much right—no more and no less—to defend the existing system as the Third World has to attack it and pull it down. The question is, of course, at what cost." In fact, however, the entire thrust of Barraclough's article belies this stance of grand detachment, since his identification with the Third World and its claims is only too apparent throughout.

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These considerations must of course be set apart from the intrinsic validity of claims to reparations. What are the circumstances which validate claims to reparations, however expedient or not it may be to press such claims? In principle, there is little difficulty in answering this question. The claim to reparations is justified in response to wrongful and injurious action. But what is the nature of the wrongful and injurious action that validates claims to reparations? The standard response, as we know, is action that constitutes exploitation. Here again, however, one question only serves to provoke another. What is essential to comprise a relationship of exploitation?

In a recent discussion of this protean term, Barrington Moore, while recognizing the "penumbra of emotive vagueness" marking its use, nevertheless concludes it is possible to give exploitation "a meaning independent of the feelings, preferences, and even whims of the parties to any given social relationship." "As a useful working definition," he writes, "we can say that exploitation forms part of an exchange of goods and services when (1) the goods and services exchanged are quite obviously not of equivalent value, and (2) one party to the exchange uses a substantial degree of coercion." Moore freely acknowledges the difficulties that in practice attend the determination of "equivalence" but he assumes that "a relatively disinterested observer . . . could make adequate distinctions most of the time. To believe otherwise forces one to hold that human society has never been and never *can* be based on anything but a mixture of force and fraud."*

It seems to me that Moore's assumption and his conclusion are open to question. On the notorious difficulties of establishing equivalence, little need be said here save to remind ourselves that —notwithstanding the claims of liberals and Marxists alike—the notion of equivalence is socially determined, hence normative in character. This notion is not objective in the sense that it is somehow inherent or immanent in the nature of social—or economic—relationships. No doubt a "relatively disinterested observer" could determine equivalence—or the absence thereof—once given the socially relevant standards. Experience does not vindicate the view that such determination can be made in the absence of agreed-upon criteria. And it is precisely the absence of agreed-upon criteria for determining equivalence that is normally at issue. Certainly, it is at issue in the claims of underdeveloped states for reparations.

Even if the determination of equivalence should prove next to impossible, it does not follow that all social relationships must be based on a mixture of force and fraud. Indeed, there is no reason why exploitation cannot be defined as a relationship in which, to quote Moore again, "one party to the exchange uses a substantial degree of coercion." To be sure, the concept of coercion is not without its own difficulties. But coercion has, despite these difficulties, an objectivity that equivalence does not have, and this is surely the case if we concentrate on the most important manifestations of coercion—the threat or use of force. So, too, fraud has an objectivity that equivalence does not and cannot have. A fraudulent relationship, it is agreed, is one based on the element of deception. What is common to both force and fraud is that they constitute relationships which presumably would not be entered into freely (in almost any sense of the term) by one party to the relationship. Equally, in both cases one party is deprived of some value against his will. In the case of force, however, this need not be a wrongful deprivation if the value taken by force was wrongfully obtained in the first place.

ARE we then to accept claims of reparations where such claims are based on relationships in which one party has evidently been made the object of substantial coercion, particularly in the form of the threat or use of force? Of course, we *may* do so in the case of most of the underdeveloped states. If we do, however, we must at the very least be clear that these are claims based on moral, not legal, grounds. Prior to the contemporary period there was little, if anything, that forbade a Western state from threatening or using force against a people not considered as constituting a recognized subject of international law. And even if so recognized by international law, the latter still permitted ample scope for the threat or use of force.

As a moral basis for claims of reparations, it is equally the case that coercion—even in its extreme forms—cannot provide such basis unless we are to read present moral standards back into the past. What was true for the international law of an earlier period was also true for international morality. In the period that extended, for all practical purposes, from the origins of the state system down to the interwar years, a relationship based on a "substantial measure of coercion" was not considered for that reason as illegitimate by international society. The prevailing notions of legitimacy—naturally enough, the product of Western powers—did not condemn coercion exercised over the "backward" peoples of the world. On the contrary, until at least World War I the use of coercive methods against such peoples was considered justified, and certainly if the purpose was to improve the conditions of those against whom coercion might be employed. To those who determined what constituted legitimate behavior, what mattered was not the employment of coercion—including force—but the purpose and

* Barrington Moore, *Reflections on the Causes of Human Misery*, 1972, pp. 53-54.

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results of coercion. We shall return to this point presently.

THERE is a still larger, if not always an apparent, issue that is inevitably raised when claims for reparations are based on the contention that such disparities in income and wealth as exist today grew out of relationships based largely on force. We are dealing with a system of relations that historically has not only been centrally based on force, but a system that *institutionalized* force as a method for effecting change. If the position is to be taken today that such change as was affected by force cannot be regarded as legitimate, and must give rise to valid claims for reparations, then these claims may well go very far toward unraveling the entire system. It is not only the material aspects of the status quo but the territorial as well that fall within this challenge. In this respect, the difficulty of the reparations claim is not simply that it is a backward-looking one (how far back?) but that if it is based on force, *simpliciter,* it must open up a Pandora's box.

How the new states will eventually come to view this Pandora's box will depend upon interest. Of this, we have already had several examples in the form of territorial disputes. Thus, in the forcible Indian seizure of Goa in 1961, the Indian government justified its action by pointing out that Portuguese possession of Goa was simply a case of "standing aggression," though lasting for four centuries, and a question of "getting rid of the last vestiges of colonialism." But this was not the Indian government's position in the territorial dispute with China, where the Indian border territories China claimed had admittedly been the result of coercion applied at the turn of the century by the British against a weak Chinese government. In the latter case, the results of colonialism were considered to have created the basis for legitimate title to territory.

It may of course be argued that claims to reparations need not be based primarily on the coercive character of a relationship but on the results held to follow from the relationship. In varying measure, this distinction is drawn by those who press claims for reparations today. Although the coercion exercised in the past by the West over the underdeveloped world continues to be roundly condemned, it is not so much the fact of this coercion that is emphasized in terms of reparations claims as the results commonly held to follow from it. The distinction is important, if only because the argument emphasizing the results of coercion, rather than the fact of coercion itself, appeals to a standard of moral judgment that was laid down by imperialists themselves, liberal and conservative alike. Nor is the argument merely one of emphasizing the benefits that flowed to the West in consequence of its past hegemony over the underdeveloped states. Even more the argument is one of stressing the injuries presumably suffered by the underdeveloped states as a result of this hegemony. The insistent claim that "you are rich today in large measure because of us" is complemented by the still more insistent claim that "we are poor today in large measure because of you."

IS THIS distinction between the fact of coercion and the results of coercion on closer inspection a distinction without a substantial difference? Clearly, the answer must depend on whether the fact itself creates a strong presumption in favor of the results here imputed to it. It is disingenuous to distinguish in principle force from theft, while also insisting in principle that where force is exercised the burden rests upon those who exercised force to prove that they did not steal (and, even more, that where they did not steal they also did not retard the development of those made the objects of coercion). At least it is disingenuous in those situations where "theft," or "retardation," although not made dependent on such protean concepts as exploitation (and its principal ingredient of "equivalence"), invokes an "as if" historical process that we have no reliable way of confirming. There are, of course, specific instances where force did clearly amount to theft. But an immense, and still growing, literature, and a decades-old controversy testify that these instances must be regarded as the exception and not as the norm.

The objection will be made to these considerations that they suggest the burden of proof must rest upon those who set forth claims of reparations. In fact, they do not do so, though there is no apparent reason why that suggestion should provoke surprise or indignation. After all, claims of reparations are ordinarily considered justified only when they rest upon an established wrong or injury. With respect to the claims set forth by the underdeveloped states, however, the particular injuries alleged have not been established, at least they have not been established in a large number of cases. What is established is simply that the relationships between Western states and most underdeveloped states were once based upon coercion. Reparations claims may be held to follow from this fact. But if they are, they must run the difficulties already noted.

In emphasizing the claims of reparations, I do not intend to suggest that this is the sole moral basis of the claims the new egalitarianism has addressed to the developed states. In some degree, it is clear that the elites of the new states have moved beyond reparations and the intractable issues thereby raised. The call for a new social contract in which those who played no part in establishing the old order will now participate in the creation of the new is, in many respects, a call that goes well beyond the reparations issue. It is not simply present standards of equity pro-

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jected onto the past that support the claims of the new egalitarianism. In part, at least, it is present standards of equity applied to the present and, even more insistently, to a hoped-for future.

In part, however, it is also clear that the new order urged by the underdeveloped states does not simply put aside claims rooted in what are seen as an unjust past. The proposed new order does not proceed on the basis that the historical slate may and should be wiped clean. On the contrary, it is apparent that the equality called for today is one which can be achieved only through measures many of which are in purpose the functional equivalent of reparations. Certainly, the discriminatory treatment that, if accepted, would form a central feature of the new international order must be seen in part at least as a form of reparations.

At any rate, whatever the precise significance we accord to the reparations claim in assessing the moral bases of the new egalitarianism, the essential outlines of the order projected by the elites of most new states are reasonably clear. Apart from the forbearance the developed states are to display in the exercise of their power, the order of the future is to be one whose principal moral imperative is to facilitate the transfer of resources by whatever means from the developed and capitalist countries of the North to the underdeveloped states of the South. The ultimate disposition of these transfers, however, is to remain the exclusive determination of the recipient states. For the new order remains an order of states and issues of equity remain issues between states.

V

ALTHOUGH the new political sensibility and the new egalitarianism converge in questioning the legitimacy of an international order based on striking disparities of income and wealth, they do so on quite different grounds and with quite different purposes. As between the two, it is the new political sensibility that, ironically enough, appears the more radical in outlook. For the challenge the new egalitarianism has made to the existing order is clearly recognizable as seen from the vantage point of the traditional competition of states. A change in the world's distribution of wealth and power is demanded. It is demanded by states and is justified in terms of the equality of states, for the order the new egalitarianism presupposes is an order *par excellence* of states. It may be argued that the "real" equality sought on behalf of the collective will ultimately be employed primarily on behalf of individual goals, that national self-fulfillment must be seen to form the precondition for individual self-fulfillment, and that the present emphasis on collective equality is therefore a temporary, though necessary, phase in a historical process the path of which will not be dissimilar from the path traced by the more advanced societies. Whatever the merit of this view, for the present and foreseeable future it is not a "shared humanity" so much as a "shared statehood" that will be emphasized. This being so, it is not the disappearance of hierarchy but a challenge to the present hierarchy and, perhaps, the eventual creation of a new hierarchy that is foreshadowed. (Not, of course, in the rhetoric of the new egalitarianism, which foreshadows the passage from an oligarchic international society to one that is democratic and egalitarian. But there is little that is new in such rhetoric. Any good Wilsonian liberal would instantly recognize it.)

However we may assess the outlook and claims of the new egalitarianism, we remain, then, in a familiar world. Not so with the outlook reflected by the new political sensibility. For the essential characteristic of this outlook is not simply its call for an international redistribution of income and wealth but its marked ambivalence toward the state. In contrast to the outlook of the elites of most of the new states, Western liberal elites look increasingly to a global order the basis of which is no longer centered exclusively, or even primarily, on the state. Accordingly, the justice imperative that legitimizes this order is no longer one which is seen in terms of the interests traditionally entertained by states.

That the justice imperative the new political sensibility proclaims rests in substantial part upon prudential calculations of self-interest is quite clear. Equally clear is the uncertainty that must continue to mark such calculations. We do not and cannot know whether the failure to reduce present global disparities in income and wealth will eventually have the rather threatening, if not apocalyptic, consequences for the developed states which are now almost ritualistically invoked in discussions of international inequality. The power of the poor that has been made so much of in recent years is either largely a piece of romantic nonsense or—more likely—a reflection of an underlying, if largely unexpressed, conviction that the patrimony of the developed and capitalist states is, after all, hardly worth defending—whether because it was largely achieved through the exploitation of others, an exploitation on which its material achievements even now depend, or because the affluence that has been created is itself a form of corruption, particularly in a world where so many remain in or near a condition of poverty, or because material well-being has become an end in itself and, as such, is not only devoid of purpose but ultimately self-destructive. Whereas the first theme is stressed by the counter-elites in the West, the other two themes have increasingly become the possession of regnant elites. But if the emphasis is different, the end result may be very nearly the same. For both, it is not the power of the poor that is at

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issue but the status of an order either that never possessed legitimacy (the counter-elite) or that is being increasingly shorn of the legitimacy it once enjoyed (the liberal elites).

Even if the prudential considerations on which the new political sensibility rests were persuasive, there would remain the practical difficulties attending its implementation. These difficulties are not resolved, they are merely illuminated, by drawing upon domestic experience. What, for example, does a minimal or adequate level of subsistence mean when applied to international society? At the very least, the determination of this meaning must prove far more complicated than the determination of minimal subsistence within domestic society. Even within the latter, we are by this time painfully aware that such determination continues to provoke widespread and deep disagreement.*

LET us assume, however, that the context of the obligation to insure minimal subsistence for all peoples can be determined. Who are the subjects of this responsibility: states or individuals? The answer surely must be states. It is only very infrequently that the proposal is made that resource transfers be shifted from the province of the state to the private individual. And not without reason, for the results of such transference are not difficult to forecast. Thus the principal agents of the obligation to effect the international redistribution required to insure minimal subsistence for all are, and will remain, states. So, too, the bearers of the obligation to effect a greater measure of international "equality of opportunity" are, and will remain, states.

Nor is it easy to see how the bearers of the rights proclaimed by the new political sensibility will be other than states, or governments. This is apparent in the case of equality of opportunity, since even a casual examination of contemporary discussions of this "right" as applied to a new international order confirms that it is the equal opportunity of states that is demanded by the elites of the new countries and accorded growing sympathy by the elites of the developed states. What is less clear is how one may conclude that the right presumably corresponding to the obligation to insure minimal subsistence is a right of states. In theory, of course, it is not, for the responsibility in question is intended as one owed to individuals *qua* individuals. In practice, the matter is bound to be otherwise unless the underdeveloped states concede what they have heretofore shown no disposition to concede. If they persist in this disposition, as may be expected, then any attempt to insure minimal subsistance would have to be undertaken through the medium of the state.

The principal burden of these remarks should be clear enough. While the order we have today is an order of states, the justice sought by the new political sensibility is, for the most part, a justice for individuals which can be guaranteed only by the atrophy of the sovereign powers states continue to claim. The ambivalence, even the tension, that marks the new political sensibility is evidently one that centers on the state and its role. For the state is at once the principal instrument through which a hoped-for redistribution is to be effected and the principal obstacle in the way of such redistribution. It is the principal instrument in the absence of effective alternative institutions for redistribution. It is the principal obstacle by virtue of its reluctance to act save on the basis of demonstrable self-interest and its resistance to yield any functions identified with its sovereignty. There is not one concept of order presupposed by the new political sensibility but two, and there is no apparent way by which these quite disparate and often conflicting concepts may be reconciled.

If this essential dilemma inherent in the new political sensibility is given but modest recognition, it is, as we have already seen, largely because of the conviction that we are entering, or have indeed already entered, a new period in history, a period marked not only by quantitative but also qualitative change. Given this conviction, the above dilemma must prove of decreasing relevance, since it evidently presupposes that the international system, together with the states comprising it, remain unchanged in kind. But the new political sensibility presupposes that the international system is being transformed in kind and that this transformation will render marginally significant the obstacles heretofore placed in the way of a global redistribution of income and wealth. For the growing restrictions on the states' traditional freedom of action presumably create the necessary, and even sufficient, condition for the development of an international society that increasingly resembles a civil society.

In the vision of a global society entertained by the new political sensibility the state will remain and still perform many important functions but it will no longer be the state we have known. The transformation wrought by a growing interdependence will eventuate in what might be called the "tamed" state, the state from which the sharp teeth of sovereignty have at last been drawn, and the state in which the parochial interests of the past have been replaced by the planetary interests that the logic of interdependence presumably necessitates. Moreover, the transformation of the state in turn signals the transforma-

* J. R. Lucas is no doubt right in saying, in reference to the developed societies of the West, that "the argument of the rising minimum . . . is by far the most pervasive argument in political thought today." "Against Equality," *Philosophy*, 40, 1965, p. 302. What is true of political thought is equally true for the practice of politics today in most Western states.

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tion of man. Indeed, to many who share the outlook described here there is no need to project man's moral transformation; there is only the need to remove the obstacles which impede the transforation that is already occurring from finding its natural expression. Thus in a recent call for a global redistribution of income and wealth we read: "It is not because men of good will find it hard to agree on what sorts of things ought to happen in the world. It is because it is so *very* hard to see how to make these things happen in a nationally fractionated system that is politically ill-structured for coping with the world's increasingly dominant needs."* Alter that system through taming the state and the promise of the new political sensibility will become a reality. For then *all* that will be necessary to consummate it, as one writer has observed in words that sum up an entire literature, "is that people in Maine should feel the same degree of responsibility toward the people of Japan or Chile or Indochina as they feel toward California."†

VI

ALTHOUGH regularly defended in terms of an enlightened self-interest, the moral claims of the new political sensibility are not only accorded a central position, their persuasiveness is taken largely for granted by those who share the new outlook. Thus Gunnar Myrdal deems the principle that the world's rich have a duty to share their wealth with the world's poor as one that is so apparently compelling it needs no extended defense. So, too, Robert McNamara sees no reason why anyone should seriously question the duty of the developed nations to promote a least minimal equity in the distribution of wealth among nations. And John P. Lewis asserts that for all the world's ideological diversities there is not "a modern social ethic anywhere that could pretend to provide enduring justification for the existing, let alone worsening, inequality in international income distribution."**

This is not the first time that a novel moral position has been so presented. What Myrdal thinks is a necessary truth that needs no defense is, by his own admission, something that was foreign to men's imagination prior to the postwar period. In McNamara's case, a duty he now sees no reason to question is one he is not on record as having been aware of before becoming president of the World Bank. John Lewis's assertion may be true, but even in its narrow truth it is misleading. The material issue is not whether any modern social ethic could pretend to provide enduring justification for existing inequality in international income distribution, but whether there is any modern social ethic that has sought seriously to justify income redistribution beyond the confines of the state. In this regard, it is perhaps significant that the most widely discussed "theory of justice" to appear in the West in many years has scarcely a word to say on the subject.††

Moreover, it is hardly necessary to add that publics in advanced Western countries do not on the whole find the moral claims articulated by the new political sensibility compelling. These claims do not coincide with what continues to represent broadly held intuitive notions about distributive justice as applied to the relations between states. On the contrary, what evidence we have points to the conclusion that the great majority persists in drawing a sharp distinction between the welfare of those who share their particular collective and the welfare of humanity, and to assume that the collective is quite entitled to what its members have created. The distinction does not preclude acts of humanitarian assistance taken in response to catastrophes, natural and social. Even here, however, such assistance is seen to be rendered as a matter of grace or bounty. Although often characterized as a duty, the characterization is misleading in that humanitarian assistance is not given as a matter of duty. In view of the moral freedom enjoyed by the giver, it may just as well be characterized as a right.

This traditional, and still prevailing, attitude toward distributive justice in the relations between states may be deplored, but to deplore it is not to explain why it remains so broadly held when it denies what is alleged to be a compelling moral position. Nor will it suffice to argue—as do Myrdal, McNamara, and many others—that this failure to acknowledge the obvious dictates of justice is due to a persisting failure of leadership. For then the question must arise why governments, which are presumably made up of men who are neither extraordinarily stupid and misinformed nor unusually deficient in moral judgment, fail to acknowledge the self-evident and, accordingly, to provide the great publics with the necessary understanding and leadership.

What is of interest here is not the answer a skeptic might be expected to give to this question, but the attitude that prompts its being raised in the first place. Why do those who share the new political sensibility simply assume that the case for gobal distributive justice is so apparent that it scarcely deserves moral argumentation? To some extent, the answer must be found in the conviction, however inarticulate, that the

* John P. Lewis, "Oil, Other Scarcities, and the Poor Countries," *World Politics*, October 1974, p. 83.

† Kenneth Boulding in Lester Brown, *World Without Borders*, 1972, preface. Boulding adds, "This is pretty small, really, but it is apparently enough to create the United States."

** John P. Lewis, *op cit.*

†† A number of critics have emphasized this omission in John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, 1971.

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present international distribution of wealth is illegitimate in that it has come about by unjust means, that is, through "exploitation," whether forcible or not. To this extent, the call for distributive justice is indistinguishable from a call for reparations.

In the main, however, it is clear that the answer rests on the assumption of a shared humanity. There is in this assumption nothing novel. What is novel is the insistence that men now act upon this assumption in a manner they have not acted in the past, that they draw positive duties of distributive justice from it that they had not heretofore drawn, and that they give a scope to those duties they have never before been willing to give. The simple, though decisive, claim of the new political sensibility is that we no longer differentiate, *for certain purposes,* between fellow citizens and mankind.

It does not seriously detract from the novelty of this claim to point out that its content is in many respects unclear. Nevertheless, it is so, even in the elementary sense that it leaves uncertain what *is* the inequality that cannot be justified. Presumably, this inequality pertains to individuals and not to collectives (or, to the extent it pertains to collectives, it still does so only to satisfy individual standards of welfare). Presumably, as well, it does not content itself simply with meeting the individual's barest physiological needs—that is, with such food, fuel, shelter, and medical care as are necessary to maintain existence—but with insuring a minimal or adequate level of subsistence to all. We have earlier remarked on the difficulties inherent in taking this concept from its domestic context and attempting to give it satisfactory meaning in a global setting. One difficulty is that there is no "normal life" of international society that is comparable to the normal life of a domestic society. (Does this mean, as seems not unreasonable to infer, that within the same scheme of justice a variable sense of relative deprivation will be understood to permit variable meanings given to a "normal life," thus permitting in turn considerable disparities in international income distribution?) Another difficulty arises from the consideration that in Western countries (and clearly in the United States) the goal of minimal subsistence such as will enable the individual to participate in the normal life of the community is largely equated with the goal of equal opportunity. Indeed, the purpose of minimal or adequate subsistence is largely seen in terms of insuring equal opportunity. But if this is so then the meaning of "equality of opportunity" can be no more apparent in the context of international society than the meaning of a "normal life." If the absence of roughly comparable levels of development renders obscure the meaning of a normal life, this absence must render similarly, if not more, obscure the meaning of equality of opportunity.

It is significant that despite the insistence of the new political sensibility that its concern is with individual welfare standards, and that these standards must insure a minimal subsistence to all, equality of opportunity as applied to individuals receives very little emphasis. This silence may be taken to indicate the belief that in the context of international justice equality of opportunity has no more than a limited relevance to individuals. Presumably it has a great deal of relevance to the collective, though, as spokesmen for the new states never tire in pointing out. Yet the meaning of equality of opportunity cannot simply be transposed from its domestic setting to the greater society of states, and this not only because within its domestic setting it is applied to individuals but because its application presupposes a given social order. As supporters and critics of the principle alike point out, equality of opportunity is meaningful only within an order the goals or values of which enjoy general acceptance to the point of being taken for granted. Unless we assume the society of states constitutes such an order, enjoying a comparable degree of acceptance, the relevance of equality of opportunity must remain limited.

Even if this assumption is made, however, difficulties remain in applying equal opportunity to states. The equal start that is indispensable to the operation of the principle is not satisfied only by the removal of formal inequalities. In addition, there must be the removal of social and material inequalities or the introduction of measures designed to compensate for, or balance out, such inequalities. In the case of states, then, it is not enough to be rid of unequal treaties and other disadvantages associated with formal inequality. One must also compensate for such social and material inequalities as will otherwise inhibit equality of opportunity. How does one do this, however, for collectives at very different levels of development? We do not have here the prospect of providing an equal start, as it were, with each new life or with each new generation. The collective is not "renewed" as is the individual, and differences in levels of development may not be overcome save over long periods. Even in the case of groups within domestic society, it has been argued that these same conditions of social and material inequality, persisting over long periods and also resulting in different "levels of development," must frustrate attempts to apply the principle of equality of opportunity. The case for discrimination in favor of racial minorities has been made on these grounds. Does the new political sensibility join with the new egalitarianism in making a similar case for the poor countries? If it does, the way is opened to going beyond equality of opportunity in the case of the poor states and

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discriminating on their behalf. But how far beyond and how much discrimination? The answer, once again, remains unclear.

These considerations need not be extended. Despite the failure to clarify what *is* the inequality that cannot be justified, this failure may be seen as much less significant than the insistence upon realizing a pattern of distributive justice, though one presently undefined, that no longer draws a distinction in principle between fellow citizen and mankind. What is the argument made for regarding as morally intolerable today a distinction that has heretofore been viewed with moral equanimity, if not indifference?

The answer, it appears, may be found in the premise that our moral obligations follow upon the fact of community and are indeed coincidental with it. What establishes a community, though, is not the state; rather it is the preexistence of community that makes possible the liberal state. In this view, then, the state is the superstructure of community, and though the superstructure is important it is not to be confused with the base, the underlying reality of community. Nor may it be accorded the same value as the community, for the justification of the state is ultimately no more, though it may be much less, than the justification of the community. But the community is, in turn, nothing other than the individuals who comprise it and who are related to one another by a certain mutuality and intensity of interest. It is this mutuality and intensity of interest, manifested in the main by a variety of economic and social relationships, that transforms the concept of a shared humanity from a noble aspiration, an ideal principle, though one without practical consequence, into a source of positive moral obligation.

Whatever one may think of this argument, there seems little question but that it is the essential argument underlying the new political sensibility. It is men's interdependence, rather than their common membership in the state, that is taken as constitutive not only of order but of justice as well. If this essential truth has been obscured it is because the history of humanity to the present period has in fact been a history of communities which, though related in varying degree, nevertheless could and did maintain a discrete existence. Given this condition, obligation was expectedly coincidental with the state, since the state was coincidental with community. Moreover, being coincidental with community, and serving effectively on the whole to protect the interests of community, the state came to be seen if not as the source of value (hence of obligation) then as the indispensable condition of value. But the historic circumstances which made the state coincidental with community and which allowed the state to be seen as the indispensable condition of value expressed no permanent truth. In a period when this coincidence no longer obtains, when the interests that comprise community transcend the state and, in consequence, can no longer be guaranteed by it, what was once an indispensable condition of value is readily transformed into the principal impediment to value.

There is no difficulty, then, in answering the question of why those who share the new political sensibility assume that the case for a global distributive justice is apparent. They do so because they consider such interdependence as exists in today's world as constitutive not only of order but of justice as well. And if one—indeed, *the*—essential ingredient of that justice is a greater measure of equality, it is presumably because an interdependence that cannot be avoided save at prohibitive cost also cannot be expected to function without substantial reduction in present disparities of global income and wealth. It is the commonalty of fate imposed by a growing interdependence that creates the need for, while making possible, a greater measure of individual equality.

One may question the essential premise of this argument as well as its reading of the contemporary scene. There is no need to accept the view that it is the community which makes possible the state. Quite the reverse may be argued and with considerably greater plausibility. It is the state that, more often than not, has created the degree of interdependence identified with community. Surely it requires a curious reading of the experience of the new states to find in their brief history a vindication of the premise that it is only the preexistence of community which makes possible the state. So, too, it requires a curious reading of the international scene to find in a growing interdependence the certain harbinger of the state's decline. Even if we accept the prospect of a world that is increasingly interdependent, the implications of such interdependence as we may reasonably expect hold out as much a threat as they do a promise (at least, this is so if we do not accept the sanguine view that interdependence is itself constitutive of order). Is it reasonable to expect that governments and publics will embrace the promise while refusing to resist the threat? If not, one may find in interdependence precisely a reason for governments eventually intent on increasing the powers of the state.

In a way, the new political sensibility also acknowledges the possibility, and even the desirability, of a world in which states, far from declining, will instead grow in the powers they yield. This is the expectation, at least, with respect to the underdeveloped countries, for the herculean task of development is not viewed as one that can be readily undertaken by weak governments. But the prospect of strong governments in the new states presents problems. Will these countries be receptive to transfers of resources

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from the rich states which are intended to reduce individual income distribution not only as between rich and poor countries but within the poor countries as well? We do not seriously raise here the condition that such transfers be also designed to promote the growth of fundamental personal freedoms, for the new political sensibility shows little apparent interest in this. It is the persistence of material disparities which commands primary attention rather than the persisting denial of personal freedoms, and this despite the fact that the latter may surely be included in the proposition of a shared humanity.

Clearly, the new political sensibility is oriented toward equality, not liberty, at any rate in the sense that if a choice must be made between liberty and the reduction of material inequality, it will be made in favor of the latter. This preference should be recognized for what it is and not obscured by the specious arguments which attempt to show that, after all, in the circumstances of most underdeveloped states the choice itself is meaningless (or an illusion), or that personal freedoms will be the consequence of an improved standard of living (which may or may not be the case), or that personal freedoms can only be guaranteed by measures of intervention in the domestic affairs of states (which may be true, but if so is equally applicable to attempts to insure internal equity of income distribution). While the preference for equality in the case of the poor countries is not compelling, it is surely a plausible and, in many cases, even a persuasive position. But nothing is gained by the political claptrap that regularly attends this preference.

Still, how does one insure the proper conditions for the realization of greater internal equality? Although the equality that the new political sensibility places so high a premium on is equality of individuals, this equality must still be achieved through the medium of states. Accepting the view that international redistribution must be determined above all by the criterion of need —that it is the needy rather than the efficient or the good who have prior claim to the resources of the developed states—the problem remains of insuring that the needy will be served. On this critical issue, what otherwise appears as an impressive consensus begins to fall apart. To some there is no way of insuring internal equity without setting political conditions for the recipient government which will almost surely prove unacceptable for the reason these conditions touch the nerve root of its domestic order. In doing so, they must also strike at the equality of state doctrine. There is thus a potential, and in practice a growing, conflict between the goal of individual equality, sought by Western elites, and the goal of collective equality, prized above all by the elites of the new states. A McNamara draws the conclusion from this conflict that the developed states, and of course international agencies, are limited to mere exhortation. A Myrdal draws the conclusion that governments which refuse to address themselves to correcting internal inequities should be denied outside assistance, no matter how needy their populations. Myrdal's position is one of aid with political conditions, and stringent political conditions at that, though they are aimed at obtaining greater internal equality not liberty. Even so, there is no more than a marginal prospect that such transfers of resources as we are likely to see in the near future will be attended by more than exhortation to the developing states. Whatever the pretensions of the new political sensibility, the rights of the "needy" will, in practice, remain first and foremost the rights of states and not of individuals.

VII

THERE is no need to provide more than the barest summary of the contrasting outlooks examined in these pages. The point has been made time and again that in dealing with the new egalitarianism we remain in a familiar world. The claims put forth by the elites of the new states leave little room for doubt or speculation; they are as old as the state system. When stripped of their rhetorical trappings, they call for a redistribution of wealth and power, a redistribution that is to be sought through the state and for purposes determined by the state. It is an old game, placed in a new and vastly expanded setting and carried on by partly different means, but an old game nonetheless. With the new political sensibility, however, we find ourselves in a world, the nature of which we can but only partially discern. For the game we are asked to play here does appear new, whether it is seen from the vantage point of the players themselves or in terms of the interests for which the game is presumably to be played.

It is the very familiarity of the new egalitarianism that enables the observer to project its future with a reasonable degree of assurance. Unless one indulges the assumption that the new states indeed represent something new, their future behavior will not be determined indefinitely by their common past. For some time yet, this past may be expected to preserve a measure of solidarity. But such solidarity may not be expected to persist in the face of growing disparities of wealth and power among the new states and the attending differences in interest these disparities bring. Even today, the degree of solidarity of the new states vis-à-vis the developed states is not, after all, a matter of higher principle divorced from ordinary considerations of interest. Although the result of a shared experience, its continuing strength is evidently dependent upon perceived interest. This is now apparent in the actions of the OPEC states as well as in the reactions of those among the poor states who have

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suffered in consequence of the measures taken by the oil cartel. What has so far held the two groups together is the fear of the cartel that its position will be weakened by the open defection of the poor states and the hope of the poor that they will somehow benefit, whether directly or indirectly, from the example set by the oil producers. Even so, the erosion of what has been from the outset a rather shaky common front may be seen today in the reception black Africans are giving to the Arab effort to represent OPEC as a sacred cause of the Third World.

It is another matter entirely to speculate on the future of the new political sensibility. Will the new outlook continue to be held by those who presently subscribe to it and, if so, will its influence gradually spread to governments and publics? To attempt an answer even to the first question seems very difficult, if only for the reason that we are dealing with a view that is held with varying intensity and with varying motivation. The common root of the new sensibility in all its manifestations is of course the proposition of interdependence. But interdependence may still be seen to convey quite different lessons. To some, it conveys the lesson that though the methods of the old politics must be changed, the interests of the old politics remain essentially unchanged. In this sense, the politics of interdependence is a new way of having one's way and the new political sensibility is an ingenious—or artfully disingenuous—rationalization for what remains an imperial policy that makes such concessions as appear necessary to placate and, hopefully, to co-opt the disaffected.

If this is not an unfair characterization of some who subscribe to the new political sensibility, such subscription may still prove significant. It is easy enough to say that should the price entailed by the politics of interdependence become too great, it may always be abandoned along with the new outlook which serves as its ideological handmaiden. At the same time, there may be a substantial price to pay in abandoning methods to which one has become increasingly committed in act as well as in word. Those who have assumed that they could always "manage" interdependence in such a way as to serve their particular interests might find that in large measure they have instead become the managed. It would not be the first time this has happened. At any rate, even if harshly put down for some as hypocrisy, the new political sensibility may yet prove significant when we recall that on more than one occasion hypocrisy has been the advance wave of a new truth.*

In the case of others, there seems no reason to doubt the sincerity of their commitment to the new political sensibility and, in consequence, the substantial sacrifice they would be willing to make in keeping with that commitment. But is it reasonable to foresee that commitment spreading to governments and to publics? John P. Lewis finds it reasonable and occurring through the mechanism of "subversion in high places." "Among nation-state decision-makers," he writes, "loyalties to parochial national interests will be progressively loosened and displaced by furtive, disguised, apologetically held but increasingly insistent loyalties to planetary interests. Actually, such subversion already is rather well advanced. . . ."†

In fact, there is very little evidence to support this projection. The transformation the new political sensibility momentarily expects shows few signs of materializing. There are solid indications that we are moving, however tortuously, toward the time when governments and publics will view acts of humanitarian assistance—not to be confused with provision of minimal or adequate subsistence—as a duty rather than a matter of grace to be taken or not at one's discretion. As measured against the past behavior of collectives, this represents a marked change. And it is through such changes that men progress. Yet it is a far cry either from the collective responsibility called for by the new political sensibility or from the claims set forth by the new egalitarianism.

* Geoffrey Barraclough in "Wealth and Power" is singularly obtuse on this point. While sensitive to the special interests interdependence is often invoked to serve, he refuses to see that the new political sensibility serves any interests other than those of a Henry Kissinger or a George Ball. Barraclough's analysis is a striking example of a sophistication that can become profoundly naive in its disregard of intellectual currents and political moods.

† John P. Lewis, *op. cit.*

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Growing Up Crowded

Martin Mayer

BEFORE the late 1940's, the annual number of live births in the United States was one of our most stable statistics. For 21 of the 37 years from 1909 through 1945, that number was between 2.75 and 3 million. During the depression decade of 1931-40, which produced the entrants to maturity of the years soon after World War II, the number of live births ranged from 2.3 million to 2.56 million. Then, in 1946, there were 3.4 million births; the next year the number jumped further, to 3.8 million, and in 1953 it crossed the 4-million mark. School enrollment, which in the period 1920-50 had risen only from 23 million to 28 million, jumped to 36 million in 1956 and 44 million in 1962.

Eventually, inexorably, these huge "cohorts" moved into the job market. At the peak period of arms production in World War II, employment in America had topped out at 54 million; at war's end Henry Wallace, the McGovern of his day, was calling for an impossible target of 60 million jobs. Yet by early 1975, an American economy that was supplying 84 million jobs (one million *more* than two years before) saw unemployment rise to the frightening level of 9 per cent and faced the need to generate 2 million new jobs every year to keep the unemployment rate from rising even higher.

These are developments of earthquake dimensions in social and economic history, and if the upward trend of birth rates had proved a permanent phenomenon in American society, as the Census Bureau was predicting only yesterday, we would soon be facing exquisitely difficult decisions about the role of government in restricting production, resettling surplus populations, and allocating access to health services, recreational facilities, and ultimately water and perhaps food. But in the mid-1970's the ratio between the number of births and the number of women of childbearing age dropped so low that in the absence of immigration the nation will eventually begin to *lose* population: the birth cohorts of 1973 and 1974 were down to a point below 3.2 million, the pre-1946 mark. What we have, then, is a single twenty-year bulge of very large age cohorts, moving along the snake of time as an undigestible mass that will in each period of its maturity distort the functioning of the relevant institutions of American society.

The extent of the crisis represented by this sudden bulge—indeed, despite the talk of a "population explosion," the very fact that there *was* a crisis—was masked by technology and affluence. In earlier times, so rapid a growth of population (especially non-productive population) would have put intolerable pressure on the food supply and on sanitary facilities. "Unless an emigration takes place," Thomas Malthus said in articulating the "laws" of population increase, "the deaths will shortly exceed the births. . . . Where there are no other depopulating causes, every country would, without doubt, be subject to periodical pestilences or famines." Instead, food production expanded so rapidly in America that diet actually improved, and medical technology reduced the incidence of disease so effectively that these huge age cohorts grew up with a sense of personal invulnerability never known before. As Dr. Lewis Thomas has put it: "Until a few decades ago . . . we moved, with our families, in and out of death. We had lobar pneumonia, meningococcal meningitis, streptococcal infections, diphtheria, endocarditis, enteric fevers, various septicemias, syphilis, and always, everywhere, tuberculosis. Most of these have now left us, thanks to antibiotics, plumbing, civilization, and money. But we remember." The young, now young adults, no longer even have such memories. Polio had been banished before they could read the newspapers.

In some areas other than food and medicine, however, the young of the twenty-year bulge, and their families, did not fare so well; moreover, those born in the first decade of the bulge (and their families) fared considerably less well than those of the second decade. Americans born in the years 1946-56 started life in hospital corridors, were mothered in too-small apartments or suburban boxes, and schooled on double sessions in crowded classrooms. Those who went to college were likely to be processed through facilities orig-

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inally planned for perhaps half as many students; those who did not go to college often found themselves in that great waste-barrel of the latter 1960's, the U.S. army in Vietnam. Reaching the age when they could open their mouths as a group, they said, not surprisingly, that the "system" did not work right any more.

Both business and government were initially sluggish in responding to the needs of the expanding American family of 1946-56.* It is, I think, significant that the first major penetration by Japanese manufactured goods in the American economy took the form of products for the youth market: motorcycles, transistor radios, portable phonographs, cheap guitars. But once we moved, we moved far. In the fifteen years from 1931 through 1945, we had built only 4.6 million new dwelling units. In the five years 1946 through 1950 we added another 4.6 million, and in the five years 1951 through 1956 we built another 5.9 million. In the *two* years 1971 and 1972, when the first-decade children of the baby boom began to need homes of their own, more new housing was added to the American stock than had been built in the entire 15-year period of 1931-1945.

Similarly with education: expenditures on the public schools rose from less than $3 billion in 1946 to almost $6 billion in 1950, to $11 billion in 1956, and crossed the $20 billion mark in 1963. By 1972, educators were claiming that the schools were starved though their budgets were over $50 billion a year. Inflation accounts for only a relatively small part of these increases—in 1946 we were spending 1.5 per cent of the Gross National Product on public schools, by 1972 we were spending 4.7 per cent.

As a consequence of all this activity, the young born in the second half of the twenty-year bulge were much better served by society than their older brothers and sisters; they are, not surprisingly (only the newspapers are surprised), much less difficult to manage, much less disenchanted with the "system." But there are still too many of them, and there will be trouble for them too down the road.

II

The most significant influence exerted on society by the existence of these extraordinary age cohorts was the crime wave, for among the characteristics of the young is that they get into trouble with the law. The Children's Bureau has estimated that between the ages of ten and seventeen as much as a fifth of all boys will make some contact with a juvenile court. Three-fifths of all serious crime in America is committed by adolescents and young men between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four—a group that grew by 50 per cent between 1960 and 1970.

It seems fair to say that we handled this situation badly. At precisely the time when it was most important to convince the young that criminal activity would be a losing proposition, our criminologists abandoned this goal entirely and went chasing after the butterfly of rehabilitation; the leading textbook in criminology haughtily dismissed the idea of deterrence as "simply a derived rationalization of revenge." Meanwhile, our appellate courts wholeheartedly adopted the philosophy Roscoe Pound described in 1906 as "the sporting theory of justice." ("The inquiry is not," he said, "What do substantive law and justice require? Instead, the inquiry is: Have the rules of the game been carried out strictly?") Nothing could have been more damaging to the socialization of the young than this transfer of attention from the question of whether or not a wrong has been committed (a question even the most poorly brought up have to confront occasionally at home and among friends) to the question of whether those making the accusations have rigorously followed every by-way of approved procedure.

The social effect of reforms in the juvenile-court system and in criminal procedure was that an entire generation, huge in number, lost the sense that, in the words of Francis Allen, "the criminal law has a general preventive function . . . that the influence of criminal sanctions on the millions who never engage in serious criminality is of greater social importance than their impact on the hundreds of thousands who do." Deprived of support from the criminal-justice system—or from the great organs of opinion, which through the 1960's looked rather indulgently on young, especially black, crime—the home, the school, and the church all lost ground to the street. It is no more than guesswork to say that a concerted attack on the dominance of the street would have prevented the present situation in the urban slums, where terror survives the ruin it has gorged—the break-up of families in a transplanted rural community stunned by the anonymity of the cities might well have blunted the most calculated intervention by the most tough-minded government. I cannot believe, though, that we would be worse off than we are.

In any case, the street has won, and not until the mid-1980's will diminishing age cohorts give us a chance to do more than establish a foundation for the rebuilding of urban institutions. Long after today's urban young have grown up and moved to the suburbs, blighted areas of our central cities will testify to the harm done by the expansion simultaneously of the numbers of young men and of the extent of their "rights."

* So were sociologists. David Riesman had rested the argument of *The Lonely Crowd* on an end to the era of population increase; republishing a substantially edited version in paperback in 1953, he noted that "the birth rate has shown an uncertain tendency to rise again, which most demographers think is temporary."

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Less important than the growth of crime but more visible as a function of the baby boom was the exaggeration of that cult of youth which has never been entirely absent from the American scene. For the adult members of an immigrant family, it has always been a kind of death to leave home and come to the New World; the justification has been opportunity for one's children. Writing at the high point of immigration to America, John Dewey looked ahead to a "century of the child." The moment arrived fifty years later.

In the accelerating affluence of the 1960's, the young acquired increasing purchasing power. They used it to buy psychic space that would be all their own: what those who pandered to them, for commercial or personal reasons, called a counterculture. Through the 1950's and 1960's, huge numbers of the young grew up in a state of virtual isolation from the productive economic life of the society. Very few had more than the remotest idea of what their fathers (and mothers) did for a living; it had long been the exception rather than the norm for a son to plan to follow his father's occupation, and the idea of rising through apprenticeship had long been discarded in favor of extended schooling outside the home.

The reasons for this are complicated and varied. Americans have always believed in education as a thing in itself and in longer years of schooling as an independent value; Dewey proposed that the extension of childhood and youth was itself a measure of the degree of civilization of a society. In addition, as the baby boom neared the age of employment, labor unions became insistent on the need to keep young people out of the job market as long as possible. Seniority provisions were strengthened in all union contracts to guarantee that the young of the 1970's could not, like the young of all previous periods, make a place for themselves by competing against the older generation. Pressure for increases in the minimum wage were brought on legislatures partly for their indirect benefit to union members (all of whom were working for scales above the minimum wage, yet stood to benefit from a general upward push), but mostly to strengthen the protection of the existing work force against what would inevitably be cut-rate competition. A high minimum wage held down youth employment because the average adolescent—lacking work habits and experience, apt to change jobs frequently—was not worth what the government said he had to be paid. In the absence of a pull from the job market, there was little reason not to stay in school (when the economy overinflated in 1972, first-time college enrollment dipped substantially; in the mounting recession of fall 1974, first-time enrollment rose). And until the end of the military draft, of course, college was much favored as the most desirable way to postpone, and perhaps avoid, military service and the threat of Vietnam.

But the prime reason so many young people continued into college was the incessantly reiterated and widely advertised promise that a college education was the best, even the only, route to a white-collar future and a good income. For some years the American Council on Education has conducted a large-scale survey of the attitudes of incoming freshman at the nation's colleges and universities. In the version of this opinion poll employed in 1971, ACE asked the new arrivals why they were going to college, and by an overwhelming margin, especially among the males, the first answer was "to get a better job." (The question was not asked again in later years, presumably because the response was considered unsatisfactory.)

The effort to keep youngsters in school was remarkably successful. James Coleman reports that "while the population of sixteen- to nineteen-year-olds increased between 1957 and 1970 by 6 million, the 'not enrolled in school' labor force component of this age group increased by only 0.6 million. Similarly, in the twenty- to twenty-four-year-old age group, which increased by 6.5 million between 1960 and 1970, the 'not enrolled' labor force increased by only 2 million in the same period." Every year since 1970, however, the problem has become less manageable, partly because the young do become older and dribble out of even the most extended educational program, partly because the numbers of young are still increasing. The first 4-million age cohort turned twenty in 1973, and from then till 1984 we shall have to absorb, every year, 80 per-cent more twenty-year-olds than we had to absorb in any year of the 1950's.

Compounding this problem is the fact that the one large section of the educational enterprise that did give specific career direction was wrong in its choice. The first purpose of American higher education had always been teacher training, and to the extent that secondary education was a preparation for college, teacher training was part of *its* purpose, too. In the 1950's and 1960's, education was the most rapidly expanding growth industry in the country, and those involved in it quite naturally prepared for continuing increases in employment. The momentum of this drive was such that the number of teachers continued to rise after the falling birth rate had started to reduce the number of pupils in the schools. Over the period 1962-63 to 1972-73, the average daily register at public elementary and secondary schools rose only 17.2 per cent, from 38.6 million to 45.2 million, while the total instructional staff in the schools rose 42.3 per cent, from 1.65 million to 2.35 million. Well into the 1970's, colleges of education simply ignored the declining birth rate, and continued to train larger and larger numbers of students for careers as teachers. The bubble burst with the class of 1973: in spring 1974, no fewer than 128,000 young teachers who had been licensed the previous June had still not been able

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to find jobs in schools. Another 110,000 joined their ranks in June 1974.

On the college level, the discrepancy between expectable demand and planned supply was even more dramatic—and even less excusable, for Alan Cartter of the American Council on Education had publicly demonstrated as early as 1965 that by the 1980's the need for new Ph.D's to teach in colleges would drop to zero. (In fact, it will drop below zero: on Cartter's 1972 projections, which by 1974 looked optimistic, the colleges would have too many professors in 1985-88 even if they hired nobody at all during those years.) Nevertheless, the output of new Ph.D's rose from fewer than 10,000 a year in 1960 to more than 34,000 in 1972. A reasonable guess at mid-decade is that half of the graduate students who hope to use their Ph.D. as an entry to teaching on the college level will find themselves disappointed—and the proportion of the unlucky will rise in the 1980's.

Elephantiasis was everywhere in American higher education in the early 1970's. By the middle of the decade, the law schools were turning out new lawyers at a rate of 25,000 a year, up from fewer than 10,000 a year in the 1950's—even though the spread of no-fault insurance promised to take away from the legal profession that quarter of its income traditionally derived from automobile-accident cases. But the real tragedy lies on the undergraduate college level, where millions of young Americans have been drawn by hopes that cannot be realized—and other millions will suffer for it.

Since the latter 1960's, roughly half of each age cohort has gone to college, up from roughly one quarter in the mid-1950's. By the most charitable estimates of the Labor Department, however, only 13 to 14 per cent of the new jobs that will be available in the fourth quarter of the century will be jobs of the kind that have traditionally required a college education, which means that half the college graduates (not to mention all the dropouts) will find less reward for their efforts than they had been led to anticipate.

Concern has been voiced in recent decades over the possibility that American colleges would produce an overeducated, unemployed intellectual proletariat. This has not happened, and it will not happen. What has been happening is something worse: jobs that were once available without educational credentials have been redefined to require them, in order to assure college graduates (by definition, the children of the middle class) a protected market of sufficient size. The price is paid by those who do not go to college (predominantly the children of the working class), whose opportunities are artificially and quite unnecessarily restricted. The headlong rush to a credentialed society was checked to a degree by the civil-rights movement, representing mostly a black community of lesser educational attainments; and in the Duke Power case in 1971, the Supreme Court held that educational criteria could not be used in determining eligibility for employment in the absence of some reasonable demonstration that the education was required by the job. In a pinch, however, such demonstrations can be supplied for enough jobs to insure the continued growth of credentialism—and the colleges, faced with the prospect of diminished enrollment from the smaller age cohorts of the future, must intensify both their overt and their subtle efforts to convince government licensing bodies, large employers, and the young that a college education is a necessity.

Arriving at maturity, then, the members of the huge age cohorts of the young confront an economy in which there are not enough jobs to go around, and nowhere near enough of the kinds of jobs considered proper for a liberally educated person to absorb the supply of newcomers certified as liberally educated. The solution for the educated will be the preemption of a higher proportion of the available jobs for their exclusive occupancy; for large numbers of those who started off unlucky in nature or nurture, there will be no solution.

III

A surplus of labor from a high birth rate and the eviction of the peasantry from the farms created in Britain the long, gradual deflation of the second half of the 19th century. This peaceful, profitless prosperity produced the modern world in more ways than one: observing it stimulated in Karl Marx his peculiar vision of the future of capitalism. Competition for jobs, Marx noted, drove down money wages (neither depressing nor raising the low standard of living, because the gradually reduced pay envelope continued to buy about as much as before). Meanwhile, the price of interest-bearing assets tended to rise, reducing the apparent "profit" on capital, because the value of a given quantity of earnings was ever-increasing. Marx saw an inevitable squeeze on the working classes, coupled with an "iron law" of diminishing profits, until capitalism collapsed in a crisis of underconsumption. Later, when none of this happened, Lenin amended the theory to show how imperialist policies, by creating markets in foreign countries, could postpone the crisis of underconsumption, though only by further impoverishing the workers of the home country. This was wrong too; but its corollary—that imperialism benefited the people of the colonized countries more than the people of the home country—did prove out; it is not much talked about these days.

The legacy of Malthus and Marx and other 19th-century economists has made it difficult for today's analysts of social phenomena to understand the changes that affluence and technology have wrought in the pressures that unusually

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large numbers of young people now apply to their community. It is taken for granted today that each new arrival must be provided with food, clothing, and shelter to a minimum standard that would have seemed notable luxury in the 19th (or early 20th) century. A high birth rate thus tends, within a few years, to increase substantially the quantity of national product that must be consumed here and now rather than saved for the future. Meanwhile, technology requires that each new job be backed by capital investments of a size that would have been unimaginable as recently as a generation ago. Assuming the persistence of women's propensities to work for a living, the United States over the next decade will have to add 2 million new jobs a year simply to keep an already high unemployment rate from rising further. In 1975 dollars, the average capital cost per job is something over $40,000. Thus an annual investment of $80 billion—6 per cent of the net national income—will be required merely to absorb the new workers and maintain the average real income of members of the work force. (Jobs created without the minimum capital investment presumably yield less output per man-hour worked, thus reducing the workers' average product and, unavoidably, average income.) In the absence of effective conscious or automatic procedures for long-range decision-making, the simultaneous demand for increased consumption and increased capital accumulation generates an accelerating inflation.

In the conflict of interest among generations, it seems clear enough that inflation benefits the young at the expense of their elders. Much of the wealth of the community is held in the form of titles to money—savings accounts, government bonds, insurance policies. Inflation depreciates the real value of these titles to money, few of which are owned by the young. Though alert entrepreneurs and speculators can make a good thing of inflation, most already established citizens are losers. Greater shares of the national product will go to current earnings rather than to stored wealth —and the young can fight with some success for their just proportion of the former. Easily available consumer credit allows the young to accumulate what the economist Harry Johnson has called "consumer capital"—an automobile, appliances in the kitchen and laundry room, even a house—at bargain prices, because the loan taken when the purchase is made can be paid off from ever-rising salaries in money of ever-depreciating value. Interest rates rise, but not that much (especially on consumer loans, which are politically sensitive). The fact that inflation benefits the debtor class at the cost of the creditor class means that it benefits the young at the expense of their parents. Thus very large cohorts produce continuing political pressure for inflationary policies.

Unfortunately, an inflation-prone society is an uncomfortable environment in which to live. As they achieve full maturity, today's young will find themselves deprived of that satisfying sense of accomplishment and security which has historically made early middle age "the prime of life." Indeed, about the only time one can honestly predict happiness for most of the children we brought into the world in such numbers in the 1950's is their later middle age, when their own children will no longer be a burden, the housing and capital accumulations of the past will be entirely adequate, high personal consumption will become socially desirable, and it will be truly practicable to clean up the environment because the capital investment funds required for this purpose will no longer be needed for job creation. The time for "no growth" will come when there is no growth.

IV

The story of the bulge in the demographic snake has an appropriately gray ending. "One of the most radical changes" in modern life, Marion Levy has written, is that "we take it for granted that practically everyone will survive into senility." By 1975, more than a tenth of the American population was over sixty-five years old, as against only 4 per cent in 1900. In what may turn out to be the most dramatically unfair action against the outsize cohorts of the twenty-year bulge, their parents in 1971 rewrote the social-security laws to assure themselves a highly comfortable retirement at four to five times the monthly income that social security yields today—an income based not on the social-security taxes they were paying themselves but on the taxes that will be paid by the larger work force now coming on. But when the current demographic bulge reaches retirement age, *its* successors will be too few to support so many old people in so fine a style: the unfunded liabilities of the social-security system will then total well over 2 *trillion* of today's dollars. Assuming only minor growth in longevity from all the medical research now in progress, a social-security tax rate approaching 30 per cent of the national payroll will then be necessary in order to meet the payouts prescribed by law, and nobody believes that social-security taxes of those dimensions will actually be assessed.

The work of reneging on the promises has already begun. Early in 1975, the Social Security Advisory Council recommended changes in the benefit provisions of the law that would not take effect until after the year 2000. Their impact would be to reduce by about 30 per cent the benefits which those retiring after that year are due to receive, and to postpone the permissible age of retirement with full entitlements. By 2011, when the children born immediately after World War II reach sixty-five, the age of retirement would be set at sixty-six, according to the new recommendations; by 2018, when the first 4-million cohort reaches sixty-

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five, the age of retirement would rise to sixty-seven; by 2024, when the peak cohort of 1959 will be sixty-five, the age of retirement would be sixty-eight. Informed that these changes were being recommended, the Congressmen most closely involved with social-security legislation reacted with outrage—and no doubt the law will not be changed for some years. But change will almost certainly come, because the only alternative is an immediate, substantial increase in today's social-security taxes, and nobody will vote for that—not today's middle-aged, who would get nothing from it, and not today's young, whose time horizons are nowhere near high enough to encompass the prospect of their own retirement.

I say "almost certainly," because this generation does have one advantage that will persist: in a democratic society, big age cohorts have big voting strength. More so than any ethnic group, the aged can be welded into a united political force; today's elderly community, much smaller than the prospective retirement cadre of the early 21st century, is already beginning to demonstrate remarkable clout in defining political issues for its own benefit. Of course, we may not get so severe a demographic imbalance between old and young as a straight-line projection of the birth cohorts of the last years would predict. Birth rates are still cyclical; and more than half the girls born in our baby boom have not yet reached the age of reproduction. For the number of live births in the United States to remain at the low 1974 figure of 3.2 million a year would require in the 1980's a birth rate of about 80 a year for each 1,000 women between the ages of eighteen and thirty-eight, which would be only half the rate in their parents' generation and 30 per cent below even today's historic lows. Still, it does seem unlikely that America will again in the foreseeable future produce age cohorts the size of those born in the period 1946-66. Reflecting both selfish and altruistic motives, the conservation ethic will grow stronger in the years ahead; contraception will be increasingly easy and foolproof; and the battle to maintain a horror of abortion as part of our morality has already been definitively lost.

We are now at midpoint in an age that for demographic reasons alone will be unique in American history. Although it is fashionable to be gloomy about the country's future, there will be many reasons to be glad when this present becomes the past.

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The Dagger of Ali Ibn Masrur

A Story

David Shahar

AFTER the death of her husband, Yehuda Prosper Luria, known by both Jews and Muslims throughout the old *Yishuv* as Yehuda Prosper Luria Bey—a title conferred on him many years before by the Turkish Sultan—our landlady, Mrs. Gentilla Luria, stopped visiting all her friends and went out only once a week to call on Judge Dan Gutkin who helped her wind up her late husband's estate to her complete satisfaction, just as he had always helped the old man himself to settle his affairs in the most satisfactory way. This judge, a member of the Supreme Court, was himself also a famous man in the Palestine of those days, much sought after by dignitaries and notables of both the Jewish and the Arab communities because of his supposed influence with the British Mandatory authorities. He remembered not only the days of Mrs. Luria's greatness, when, as the wife of the Spanish consul at Jaffa, she took her place among the wives of all the other pashas and beys of the Ottoman Empire, but also the days of her beauty, when she felt on her back the eyes of men turning to look at her as she passed.

Soon, however, Gentilla began to return disappointed from her visits to the judge because of the dark alleyways into which his conversation tended to stray. Instead of dwelling on the memory of those days when she had been singled out from all the other girls at the Evelina de Rothschild School for Girls, he began returning in his thoughts and conversation to the days which had preceded that golden age, to her obscure early childhood as a carpenter's daughter in Midan Street in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, a ragged, barefoot little girl peeping out of the attic window above her father's workshop where the whole family lived in a kind of box, reeking of carpenter's glue, sawdust, and turpentine. All his life Yentele's father (for that had been her name until the day Consul Yehuda Prosper Luria Bey came to pay a courtesy call on the Evelina de Rothschild School for Girls, and she was the one chosen to present him with a bunch of flowers on behalf of the graduating class) lived in abject poverty, although he was the best carpenter in Jerusalem, had studied cabinetmaking in the metropolis of Vienna, and had made the Ark of the Law for the Kahal Zion synagogue (which had an underground passage leading directly to Mount Zion and the sepulchers of the House of David).

From the top of the wooden stairway leading to the attic Yentele would look down on her father standing meekly and humbly in his workshop, bowing his head before the synagogue wardens, and timidly asking for a few pence to buy food for the Sabbath in view of the money still owed him for carving the Ark of the Law (which had cost him months of back-breaking work and for which his fee was in any case inadequate), while they put him off with excuses and mollified him with subtle new interpretations of the Law and wonderful midrashim. In contrast to these worthies, the rich Bukharan Jews who commissioned cabinets as broad as bridal beds suffered from a certain poverty of language and scholarship; unable to sweeten the pill of their reluctance to pay with the sayings of the sages, they glared at him instead, and abused him for the impertinence of his demands.

From this pit of hunger, disgrace, and humiliation the carpenter was saved only by the intervention of certain religious fanatics, who set his house on fire because of a cross he made for the Russian monastery on the Mount of Olives. From time to time the abbott of the monastery would give him various jobs, but crosses he had always refused to carve until the situation grew so desperate he no longer had money for Sabbath candles. And even after he consented, the carpenter worked on the big olive-wood cross only at night, both because of his own uneasiness, and because he did not want passers-by to see that the hand which had carved the Arks of the Law was also the hand carving the cross. One night, after the job was finished, little Yentele woke up and through the round attic window saw the great cross outlined against the paving stones and shining in the moonlight, creeping slowly toward its destination on the Mount of Olives. That same night, her father's worst fears were realized, and sooner than he thought. A few yards from the shop a group of

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worshippers on their way home from midnight prayers at the Western Wall encountered the carpenter with the cross on his back, and the next night his house was set on fire. In the dead of night they fled from the Old City to the Nahalath Shiva quarter, and the carpenter's wife made up her mind to revenge herself on those who had burned her house down by sending her children to the Christian mission school. Yentele's father pleaded with her not to; she compromised by sending them to the schools of the Jewish "heretics and atheists" outside the Old City walls.

It was not until those tongues of flame began licking at the wood in her father's workshop that happy memories began for Gentilla, pulled from her bed next to the round attic window, carried through the flames in her father's arms out of the Old City, and enrolled by her mother in the Anglo-Jewish school. Her father's life, too, it seemed to her, became a little easier from then on, for although he was at first convinced that he and his outcast family would starve to death, orders for plain school desks and benches soon came to take the place of elaborate cabinets and Arks of the Law. But the carpenter never again dared show his face inside the Old City walls, and never again set foot on the paving stones of its streets until the day he died. Sometimes he would suddenly run and hide in the dark little kitchen adjoining his new workshop, thinking he had caught sight of the synagogue warden passing in the street—the same one who still owed him half the money for the Ark of the Law and who might even have had a hand in the burning of his house. He would run away and hide like a guilty child, ashamed of himself for what he had done, and ashamed of himself before his wife and children for being ashamed. A final reminder of that moonlit night on which he had carried the big olive-wood cross on his shoulders was the double rupture of the groin which remained with him for the rest of his life. Every few days, while he was at work, his intestines would slip down into his testicles and he would fall to the ground in terrible pain, writhing and clutching and screaming. His wife would rush to heat up the flat stones which were always kept next to the stove for this purpose, and put them on her husband's groin to ease the pain and force the intestines back into place.

And now it seemed that Judge Gutkin had nothing better to do than to carry Gentilla back to the memory of those terrible times. The last time she had called on him all he would think about were the gloomy alleyways of the Old City. However hard she tried to turn him back onto the glorious highways of his life (beginning with the day he returned from Oxford University with the imposing degree of an English barrister-at-law and culminating in the day he became an Officer of the British Empire at whose approach British officers themselves jumped to attention and saluted), he insisted, stubborn as an old mule, on returning to the dark, twisting alleyways of his childhood in the Old City. "Do you remember," he said to her, "when you lived in Midan Street, and we lived in the almshouse called the German Compound, *'Der Deutscher Platz'*?" "What are you talking about," she cried indignantly. "Are you trying to tell me I'm as old as you are? When you lived in the German Compound I wasn't even born, and the little girl you remember from Midan Street was my sister Pnina, who's seven years older than I am. Don't forget that you're at least fifteen years older than I am, and you were already a pupil at the Little Yeshiva when I was born. In any case, please stop reminding me of the dirty, stinking streets of the Old City. What am I talking about, fifteen years? You're at least twenty years older than I am! You were Yehuda Prosper's friend, so you must be older than I am by twenty years at least."

"It was only when I was a pupil at the Little Yeshiva," he said on one occasion, without paying the slightest attention to her remarks about the difference in age between them which increased each time she thought of it, "that I dared to enter the Karaite Compound* at the end of the alley on the border of the Muslim Quarter. And not by daylight either, God forbid, but after evening fell, stealing in as if to commit a crime. These Karaites were so ostracized that the rabbis refused to convert a Karaite *Haham* who wanted to become a Jew and promised to donate all his money to the Jewish religious charities. Any *goy* in the world, Muslim, Christian, or heathen had the legal right to convert to Judaism, but not the Karaites. The synagogue, a thousand years old, was buried deep in the ground; it contained the oldest Torah scroll in the world. When I started to go down the cold, dark, stone stairway I felt that I was committing an even greater sin than the time I stole a look into the church of the Holy Sepulcher. I took off my shoes and left them, just as the Karaites did, at the head of the stairs next to the water cistern—there was a big hole in the heel of my right sock. Remember how we used to call holes in the heels of our socks "potatoes"? With every step I felt waves of fear engulfing me and the cold kiss of the naked stone on the heel of my right foot. I knew that every step was bringing me closer and closer to defilement, but I also knew, without feeling any surprise at the contradiction, that precisely there, at the very bottom of the pit of sin into which I was sinking, our holy ancient Law lay hidden in its original purity, unencumbered by exegesis or interpretation. And when I reached the bottom of that abyss of terror and stood on the floor of the synagogue, I knew that only God

* Karaites: A Jewish sect, dating from the 8th century C.E., which rejects rabbinical tradition and the Talmud, and bases its teaching solely on the Scriptures. It survives only in Jerusalem, Egypt, the Crimea, and Turkey.

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could save me and my heart cried out to Him in prayer—not one of the prayers from the prayer book, but 'Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.' And while I was saying this prayer to myself, without moving my lips, I was answered. All at once I was lifted up to a great height, through all the layers of sin and defilement, and I found myself breathing pure, clear mountain air, free of fear or anxiety or dread, free of the need to pray to any god at all. The moment I was answered I didn't even feel the need to thank Him—He had done His job and He could go.

"But, Yentele, how did the light get into that Karaite synagogue? It was a cellar, after all, buried deep in the ground. It's funny—while I was standing there I never gave it a thought, and now fifty years later this trivial question suddenly pops into my head in the middle of a complicated property case when I have to give all my attention to the arguments of the contending parties, and it hasn't stopped worrying me since. I can't seem to remember any windows, but there must have been windows somewhere in the ceiling beyond the pillars supporting the roof. What do you say, Yentele, where did the light come from? Do you remember how Ali Ibn Masrur tried to escape to that same Karaite synagogue after the famous murder in the *suk* Elatarin? I don't think he knew where he was running to. He just ran through those winding streets until he came to the Jewish Quarter, and like a hunted animal dived for shelter into the first hole he came across. But maybe he knew very well that the cellar was a synagogue, and thought its holiness would protect him—remember how the Muslims believed the Jews had all sorts of magic powers? He may have thought there was an altar in the middle of the synagogue and that sacrifices were offered on it, and all he had to do was reach that altar, hang onto it, and be saved! What do you say, Yentele? Why are you getting up to go already? Stay a little longer, you aren't in a hurry to go anywhere, are you?"

"And why should I go on sitting here? The old are like children—never was a truer word spoken. Here you are, returning to the nonsense of your childhood like a stubborn old horse returning to its stable, and if I go on sitting here any longer I suppose there's nothing to stop you from returning to the days when your mother wiped your backside for you. And now goodbye until next week." And just when her displeasure with the judge's conversation had grown so great that she was considering whether it wouldn't be best for her to stay away for a month or two until he recovered his sense, he started coming to visit her instead, turning up at unheard of hours in the middle of the day or in the evening on his way to or from the courthouse, when she was quite unprepared to receive visitors of any description at all, let alone people with important positions in society.

On one of these unexpected visits the old judge gave rise in me—quite unintentionally, since it is unlikely that he paid the slightest attention to the strange child sitting in a corner of the verandah pretending to be engrossed in Bialik's translation of *Don Quixote*—to a violent storm of emotion, shameful, terrifying, and embarrassing at once, as I found myself, while listening to him reminiscing in his calm, deliberate voice, implicated in a murder which had been committed in the Old City twenty years before I was born.

This terrible storm, whose reverberations were to pursue me, both waking and sleeping, for days to come, descended like a bolt from the blue on a wonderfully clear, calm summer's day. Gentilla was sitting at the entrance to her room, as was her habit in the early evening, sorting rice in a wide copper basin with a detached, distant look in her eyes, and humming "Three Blind Mice," which she had learned long ago at the Evelina de Rothschild School for Girls, when the judge's car was heard approaching from the direction of the Russian Compound where the courthouse was situated, and drawing to a stop at the gate. A cry of despair broke from Gentilla's lips as she stopped sorting the rice and sat frozen in her seat, paralyzed by the catastrophe which was about to overtake her —that of being discovered by an important visitor in her disheveled daily state, with untidy wisps of gray hair escaping from the handkerchief bound around her head like one of those inferior nobodies, the pious Orthodox women she hated with all her soul. "Pnina, hurry up and receive the judge here on the verandah. Whatever you do, don't let him into the house! Tell him I'm not at home. No, tell him I don't feel well, that I've got a headache. Hurry up, for God's sake! Until that woman moves her fat behind the whole world can return to chaos."

Despite the disorder which the sound of the judge's approaching car had produced in Gentilla's soul, she nevertheless kept a clear enough head to change the command of "Tell him I'm not at home" to "Tell him I don't feel well," in case the unexpected visitor stayed long enough to allow her to change her clothes and, if not dye her hair, then at least paint her naked face and put a decent covering on her shames and humiliations—to make all those changes in her external appearance which were intimately associated with changes in the state of her soul and which, therefore, took so inordinately long to effect. By the time Pnina had moved her fat behind and finished placing the three-legged iron table in the middle of the verandah and next to it the red plush armchair which had been reserved in its time for the old bey, her younger sister, who had shut herself behind locked doors in her room, was lying flat on her back in bed with her eyes closed in an attempt to recover from palpitations of the heart, compose herself, and gather strength for the effort of changing her clothes.

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If the fundamental purity (which was connected with the desire for perfection) in the makeup of Gentilla's soul stood in direct relation to the slowness of the rhythm of her life, then she could only have attained the perfection she aspired to in receiving her guest by stopping time in mid-course and freezing it until her preparations were completed. But the sun which stood still upon Gibeon and hastened not to go down at the command of Joshua was not about to stand still at the command of Gentilla, and scarcely had she shut the door behind her and fallen upon her bed, than the judge's Arab driver leapt from his seat and hurried around to open the car door for his long, lean master, who emerged in a dark blue suit with stiff white collar and black tie and a black London hat on his head, like all the other British masters busy keeping law and order in all the other colonies and dominions and mandates and protectorates of the British empire all over the world. His square-jowled bulldog face fitted his clothing to a nicety, exuding so distinctly British a chill that no one who was unfamiliar with his past could have imagined that the possessor of this face could not only quote chapter and verse in Hebrew, but had been born and bred in the Old City of Jerusalem and gone to school at the yeshiva of Hebron.

It should not be hastily concluded, however, from the attributes of his person or the correctness of attire in which his lean flesh was clothed that it was due to these alone that Judge Gutkin had attained to the exalted degree of Officer of the British Empire, since there is no doubt whatsoever that he owed not a little in his climb to the top to the manner in which he comported himself on the bench itself. In everything he said and did in the courtroom he observed the strictest letter of the law, always maintaining the same severe expression on his face, which remained cold and impassive, with never the shadow of a smile or a twitch of impatience or a frown of displeasure to offer a clue as to which way the wind was blowing. Because of his infinite patience and the cold, impassive formality with which he conducted all the cases that came before him, his sentences always came as a surprise—and not always because of their severity. Sometimes he would search until he found a technical flaw in the presentation of the evidence, or an irregularity in police procedures, or mitigating circumstances which had escaped even the counsel for the defense, in order to pass a light sentence on an Arab murderer who had cruelly stabbed a friend to death for failing to pay a ten-*grush* debt or for making love to his wife. On other occasions, no less surprising to the defendants and their lawyers, he would suddenly come down with the full force of the law on, say, a shady business transaction where nothing was at stake, in the last analysis, but money.

The climax of these surprises, which threw the entire Jewish community into an uproar and incited politicians of all shades of opinion against him, was the famous verdict he handed down in favor of certain Arab tenants who had refused to move from land which the Jewish National Fund had purchased from their *effendi* landlords residing in Beirut. During the course of this famous case his Honor, the Jewish judge, to the horrified disbelief of the lawyers representing the Jewish national institutions, discovered among the most obscure paragraphs of Ottoman law a tiny clause so insignificant that it had escaped the notice of generations of Turkish legal experts, and on the basis of this recondite legal quibble he reached a verdict in favor of the Arab defendants. Among the other accusations hurled against him in the aftermath of this shocking event was a rumor, which swept the community, that this reactionary who served the interests of the British and the Arabs, this traitor to his people for the sake of an imperial decoration, was no more averse to receiving bribes than any British or Arab official, and had, in the very case in question, certainly not refused the presents and gifts generously heaped upon him by the Jewish National Fund. In other words, he took his fill of bribes but gave nothing in return, and therefore not only was he corrupt from the point of view of national, social, and legal morality, but from the standpoint of thieves' honor he was even more shameless and unprincipled than the Arab and British officials who had had the decency to keep their side of the bargain and play by the unwritten rules of the game. When the legal advisers of the national institutions tried to put pressure on him by veiled threats involving prosecution for bribery, they discovered to their consternation that he had done his work so well, so expertly and elegantly, that there was not a trace of incriminating evidence against him, and for this feat alone —as the wits among them were quick to remark— he fully deserved the title of Officer of the British Empire.

THE Officer of the British Empire climbed the steps to the home of his old friend, the Officer of the Ottoman Empire who had departed this world only a few weeks before, reaching the verandah just as the Jerusalem widow of the departed was shutting herself in her room and her sister Pnina was drawing up the red plush armchair which had been reserved until then for the exclusive use of Yehuda Prosper Bey. As soon as he had seated himself in the armchair with his face toward the setting sun, Pnina hurried off to bring him some biscuits and a cool drink. Not forgetting the driver who waited in the car below, she brought him too a tray of refreshments on which she placed, between the cool drink and the plate of biscuits, a five-*grush* coin. This coin, which was considered a very handsome tip for a driver of any description, was accepted calmly and casually, with none of the grateful thanks and obsequious bowings and scrapings

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characteristic of the insignificant drivers of lesser masters: he thanked her with a slight nod of his head and a polite smile, an important driver honored by the honor accorded his famous master.

Meanwhile I was flooded with a sense of uncomprehending wonder at the sight of the judge with his mane of white hair combed severely back from his forehead on either side of the part above the square-jawed assertiveness of his lean face, lowering his long limbs into the armchair of the old bey who used to sit there drawing a large, red handkerchief over his smoothly shaven, shining head to wipe away the beads of sweat sparkling like fireworks in the setting sun. The picture of the old bey, as I had last seen him before his death, sitting on this same red armchair with the checked red scarf his Jerusalem wife had wrapped around his neck, his hoarse old voice shouting in impotent rage, superimposed itself on the picture of the judge sitting on the same verandah in the same armchair without blurring or erasing its lines to the slightest degree.

"You know," said the judge to Pnina, who came and sat down beside him after bringing back the tray she had taken to the driver, "he was only ten years older than I am yet he belonged to a different empire, the Ottoman empire." Pnina sighed and wiped her nose with a lot of noise and fuss and her eyes grew moist. "No, no" she contradicted him. "Yehuda Prosper, may he rest in peace, was fifteen years older than you, or maybe twenty. You were a young man, no more than a boy, when you left the yeshiva and asked him to find you a job. By then he had been married to my sister for a couple of years already. You're my age, or two or three years older at most. Don't you remember how we stole into the Karaite Compound together to see the Turkish police arrest Ali Ibn Masrur after the murder in the *suk* Elatarin? People talked about it for years, but what exactly happened I can't remember at all."

"But of course I remember. I remember it all very well, Perele. After all, it was the first time in my life I actually saw the law in action with my own eyes," said the judge, and went on looking straight at the setting sun, which shed a reddish-blue light, like burnished copper veined with steel, on the white hair combed severely back and the inscrutable face which seemed utterly detached not only from what was happening around him, but also from what was happening inside him, and even from the melodious voice issuing from his mouth, a lion's mouth turned down at both corners.

There was no connection at all between the judge's voice and the inscrutable expression of his face. That soft, melodious, reassuring voice always came as a pleasant surprise when it emerged from the cold, withdrawn face of its possessor, but now as I floated gently on its waves I was suddenly flooded with waves of terror—as if I were sliding down a rope stretched between two mountain peaks and the least deviation from the rhythm and equilibrium of the slide might send me hurtling into the abyss below. The voice dived thirty years backward in time to the tale of the deed of Ali Ibn Masrur which had opened Dan Gutkin's eyes, for the first time in his life, to the workings of the law.

AT DAWN Mahmud *effendi*, a leading citizen of the city of Bethlehem, rose to travel in his carriage to Jerusalem, where he intended purchasing fine linens and perfumes and jewels as presents for his new young fiancée. This girl seemed to him the living embodiment of the description of the Efreet's mistress in the "Second Kalandar's Tale" in the *Thousand and One Nights*, which he had read as a young man and never forgotten: "There stood a damsel like a pearl of great price, whose favor banished from my heart all grief and care, and whose soft speech captivated the wise. Her figure measured five feet in height, her breasts were firm and upright, her cheeks a very garden of delight, her color lively bright. Her face gleamed like dawn through curly tresses which gloomed like night, and above the snows of her bosom glittered teeth of a pearly white. As the poet said of one like her:

Four things that meet not, save they
here unite
To shed my heart-blood and to rape my
sprite:
Brilliantest forehead; tresses jetty
bright;
Cheeks rosy red and stature beauty-
dight."*

The youngest of his first wife's sons, little Daoud, who was his favorite child, begged his father to take him along to the Holy City in his carriage, and he granted his wish because he loved him dearly.

After finishing his business in the markets of Jerusalem, Mahmud *effendi* strolled leisurely through the *suk* Elatarin, which is the perfume market, on his way back to the carriage waiting for him at the Jaffa Gate, with his son trailing behind him. As he lingered to watch the goldsmith at his work, Ali Ibn Masrur (who up till then had been considered an upright man who feared God and eschewed evil) suddenly broke away from the crowd and stabbed him to death with a dagger. Before the child had lifted his admiring eyes from the cunning fingers of the goldsmith as he hammered the pure gold, his father fell to the ground, his blood spilling red on the paving stones.

Afterward, during the trial, the child Daoud sat next to his mother, along with the rest of the murdered man's relatives, and kept his eyes fixed expectantly on the judge, waiting with the utmost concentration to hear what he would say. The boy

* From *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night: A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainments*, by Richard F. Burton, Heritage Press, 1934.

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imagined that it lay in the judge's power to bring his father back to life, and that the trial being conducted before his eyes was merely a ceremony required to enable him to exercise his magic powers, a necessary formality at the end of which the judge would stand up in his place and call out, "Let Mahmud *effendi* of Bethlehem enter!" and the door behind the judge's back would open wide and he would come into the courtroom, to the great joy of all assembled there—his father in all his glory. About the murderer the child did not think at all, and showed no desire to see him punished or to be revenged upon him. When the judge persisted in performing his rites and rituals around the irrelevant figure of Ali Ibn Masrur, delaying the utterance of the magic words which would resuscitate his father until he could bear it no longer, the child decided to take matters into his own hands. He ran to the door behind the judge's rostrum, opened it wide, and cried in a voice choked with tears: "O my father, come to me, come to me already."

Morning broke the next day and Ali Ibn Masrur was taken into the courtyard of the Kishle prison to be hanged by the neck until dead. The moment the prisoner gave up the ghost there was a burst of laughter from the prison guards and the people who had come to watch, owing to a slight mishap. His belt came undone and his trousers fell down, and the whole of his body from the navel to the knees was exposed to view. The moment the rope throttled him and his neck broke under the weight of his body, his member stood erect and ejaculated.

PNINA sat straight in her chair, dried her eyes and wiped her purplish nose with a big handkerchief; next to the bony, long-limbed judge, all Pnina's roundnesses were emphasized—the beads of her eyes, the button of her mouth, the rotundity of all her components in their skin of clothing. "You don't know what a good man the late Yehuda Prosper was and how much good he did in secret," she said to the judge after putting her handkerchief away in her apron pocket. "I wouldn't be in the least surprised if he was actually one of the *lammed-vav*—the thirty-six righteous men of his generation."

The loud peals of Gentilla's laughter bursting out of the closed room behind the judge's back were so infectious that they succeeded in etching lines of gaiety even on his face and in bringing to his lips the ghost of a smile that was almost happy. The landlady, who had been listening flat on her back in the seclusion of her room to every word of the conversation being conducted on the verandah, without removing her attention for a moment from the fine shades and nuances of her own innermost sensations, as though tuned to two different wavelengths, was so amused by the idea of Yehuda Prosper's being numbered among the righteous that she was swept away on the peals of her own laughter, and rising from her bed, opened the door and joined the conversation just as she was, without changing a single item of her clothing; for, once she had actually been overtaken by the right mood, she no longer paid any attention to the external formalities of dress, and in fact her fits of merriment, which were becoming increasingly rare, changed her whole being completely, imbuing her features and movements with a kind of youthful ferment which did more to blur the signs of age than any illusory effects of outer apparel.

"Well, Dan, I ask you, have you ever heard the like? It's lucky for Sholem Aleichem that Pnina has never thought of collecting all the gems that come out of her mouth and putting them into a book. Imagine, all these years I'd been living with a saint by mistake—one of the *lammed-vav*, no less! I set out to catch a titled Turkish gentleman and found a saint hiding underneath a red *tarbush* instead! What a dreadful mistake, what a disillusionment, what a disappointment!"

"That reminds me of a wonderful midrash," said the judge, but as he spoke the landlady's gaiety evaporated and her face fell. "Do me a favor and don't start telling me midrashim!" she interrupted. "It was those cursed midrashim that were the ruin of my father, those talmudic paradoxes, those thumb-twisters and turners, all those casuistries of the crooked Jewish mind that I detest! My poor father, in spite of the scandalous way he was cheated and underpaid, in spite of everything he suffered at the hands of those sanctimonious crooks, went around to his last living day with the feeling that that gang of pious humbugs, the rabbis and the wardens and all the rest of the religion-mongers, owed him nothing for the back-breaking work he put into their holy arks. On the contrary, it was he who owed them thanks for condescending to speak words of Torah with him, for every one of the honey-sweet midrashim that they poured over all the rotten things they did to him, for the great honor they did him by allowing him to make their Ark of the Law free, gratis, and for nothing! Just as that saint in disguise, Yehuda Prosper Bey, lusted after women, so my poor father lusted after midrashim. Those were his only pleasures in life—listening to midrashim and making Arks of the Law."

The judge, who had spoiled her good mood with the single word "midrash" which he had dropped like a spot of black ink into a cup of clear water, immediately shut the memory of that wonderful midrash away in his heart and returned to the subject of Yehuda Prosper, but because of the sudden change in her mood the effect of his words was only to stir up ancient suspicions lying dormant at the bottom of her heart and start them fermenting until their hissing and seething filled the whole cup of her emotions.

"One of the *lammed-vav*," said the judge, "I don't think that Yehuda Prosper himself would

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have been too pleased with that compliment. On the contrary, it was Moses who fired his imagination, Moses who at the beginning of his life struck down the Egyptian, the little villain, and at the end of it Pharaoh himself, the chief evildoer—not secretly and stealthily and anonymously, but with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and signs and portents manifest to the whole world. The man who with thunder and lightning and a great noise transformed a rabble of slaves into the chosen people."

In contrast to the bitterness which had invaded the landlady's smile, voice, and words, the judge's face, for the first time since he had arrived on the verandah and taken his seat on his late friend's red armchair, broke into a real smile. But even this smile remained within the closed circle of a man enjoying an exclusive private joke, which he had no intention of sharing with anyone else. "Yes, yes. You're right. Pnina's right. One of the righteous men on whom the world rests—maybe Yehuda Prosper would have been pleased with the compliment after all. When we were standing and watching Ibn Masrur being hanged, Yehuda said of it—the righteous member—that it was the foundation of the world; only then I didn't understand what he was getting at.*

"After the sentence had been carried out, a clerk of the Turkish court brought the hanged man's belongings out for public auction. Among all the rubbish spread out in the sun on the paving stones there was only one object of any value which drew the eyes of all the bystanders—the dagger with which the hanged man had killed his victim. But no one responded to the opening bid which the auctioneer offered again and again in a very loud voice, in a kind of singsong, rising and suddenly breaking off like the blasts of a ram's horn, and what was even more surprising, no one put out his hand to examine the *shub'ria* being offered for sale, as was the custom in those days. A rumor had swept the crowd that there was a curse on this *shub'ria*, that it had once belonged to the murdered man himself, Mahmud *effendi*, who had sold it to his future murderer, and like its two last owners all the previous owners of this accursed dagger had come to a sudden, violent end. I remember how the rabble parted to make way for Yehuda Bey, who started walking very slowly, with a great sense of drama, between the two walls of eyes fixed silently upon him toward the auctioneer standing on the other side, holding the *shub'ria* in his outstretched hand. The *baksheesh* he gave the auctioneer was more than the whole of the opening bid for which he bought the *shub'ria*, and as he started back to his place, a king in all his glory with the *shub'ria* stuck in his belt, the crowd seemed to expand as it caught its breath in excitement, like the audience at a circus when the animal trainer puts his head into the lion's jaw."

"He was a shrewd businessman all right," said Gentilla, "cunning as a snake." Pnina's eyes began to fill again, stealthily shedding tear after tear while her face twisted into a strange, apologetic smile. "Yes, yes," she sighed, "he was stronger than iron, a hero, and weaker than a fly."

I drew my head back just in time, jumped off the verandah, and ran to the tap in the corner of the yard. The dryness in my throat, the weight pressing on my chest, the difficulty I was having breathing had all overtaken me as I realized that the treasured object I had found and hidden away in the privacy of my room would have to be returned at once to the floor of the cellar, between the music box and the folding bed. But the judge, the landlady, and Pnina were all sitting in the middle of the verandah, next to the stairs going down to the cellar, and I was allowed down there only when the landlady herself required my assistance in conveying the folding bed up or down those stairs. So I had no alternative but to postpone the return of the dagger to the middle of the night when everyone was asleep, and although I still had a long time to wait I made a wide detour around the verandah and stole into the house through the back door to make sure the dagger was still lying where I had left it, at the bottom of the desk drawer.

Improbable and even incredible though this may sound, it is nevertheless true that the oppression which had descended upon me with the knowledge that I would have to return the *shu'bria* to its place was not accompanied by any consciousness of fear at the curse which lay on it, but rather by a feeling that in stealing it from the damp cellar floor and placing it in my warm trouser pocket I had broken into the framework of a life which was not mine. As the judge's words conjured up a picture of the old man defiantly declaring war on the devil's curse in full view of the whole town, this feeling of mine grew into an actual sense of sin, as if I had forced my way into a holy shrine and violated its sanctity by my presence: I would return the thing to its place in the dead of night, and the next morning I would go to the landlady and ask her to sell me the ancient dagger lying abandoned and unclaimed in the depths of the cellar, so that it would be mine by right, openly, lawfully, and publicly—like the old man who had dealt with a high hand and an outstretched arm.

"He was stronger than iron and weaker than a fly"—Pnina's words came back to me as I removed the little dagger from the bottom of the drawer, and its chill touch on my palm, coming together

* The reference is to a kabbalistic interpretation of Proverbs 10:25: "The righteous one is an everlasting foundation." According to the Kabbalah, there are ten spheres of divine manifestation in which God emerges from His hidden abode. These are symbolically described in a diagram of the human body. One of these spheres, called "Foundation," corresponds in the symbolical diagram to the male sexual organ.

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with the smell of the moldy green metal, suddenly flooded me with the same sense of uncomprehending wonder I had felt at the sight of the judge sitting in the old man's chair. "He was stronger than iron, and weaker than a fly." Together with the knowledge that *he* was gone while the dagger still existed, came the clear certainty, fragrant as a breath of wind in the Judean mountains on a spring day, delicate and sharply refreshing as a draft of sparkling wine, that this little dagger, this blade which was no bigger than a man's finger, this dull, cold, helpless, inanimate bit of iron, was in itself powerless to have put an end to the old man's life, or to his thoughts on the subject of his master Moses, or to the life of Mahmud *effendi* and his great love, just as it would never be in its power to put an end to this dream in which I wandered, with its abundance of memories and desires and hopes and lusts and longings and pictures and songs.

OUTSIDE, the old man's red plush armchair creaked as the judge stood up at the end of his visit to return to the motorcar waiting for him at the gate. I returned the dagger to the drawer, beneath the copy books and the textbooks, and wondered at the peculiar ideas which sometimes took hold of me. The old man had died in his bed at a ripe old age despite this dagger, if it was indeed the self-same dagger which he had purchased thirty years ago at the public auction of the personal possessions of the hanged man Ibn Masrur—yet this too was a nonsensical idea, for hadn't his own wife, Gentilla, just borne witness to the fact that he was a shrewd businessman, "cunning as a snake," who had spread the rumor of a curse on purpose in order to buy the dagger for next to nothing and sell it afterward for its full price? What was more, during the thirty years which had gone by since then, hundreds of *shub'rias* and swords and all kinds of other weapons, which he had received as security for the money he lent to his Arab customers, had ended up in the cellar, and this particular dagger, which had found its way into my hands by accident, was almost certainly among the last of them—this dagger which had murdered not Yehuda Prosper Bey but Mahmud *effendi* of Bethlehem, before whose eyes floated only the image of his beloved, in milky ribbons of steam rising from the lakes of pale blue vapors filling the valleys of the dawn road to Jerusalem, a road he traveled never to return.

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Japan After Vietnam

Edward Seidensticker

BACK in the years when we spent all our time arguing about Vietnam, there were the arguments with the moralists and the arguments with the realists. I rather early gave up on the former. It did not do to aver that America was not doing much that most countries would not do when they thought their deepest interests affected. America must be *better* than most countries, indeed all countries. America, when one became involved in such arguments, did not seem to have changed very much since Martin Chuzzlewit had his unhappy time there. One could point out that morality is a rather double-edged kind of blade, and turn away: if it is immoral to drop a bomb on someone, it is also immoral to back down on one's solemn promises.

The arguments with the realists were concerned with such finite problems as a definition of American interests. For those of us who long supported the Vietnam intervention from a sense of vague apprehension, the trouble was a feeling that the matter was not one for argument at all, but for action. There was nothing really relevant save to try something and see whether it worked, or to refrain from trying something and see if certain consequences followed. We feared that even though American interests might not be involved immediately in Vietnam, the results of a failure in Vietnam might so involve them.

Try it and see if it worked. We did not have the technical expertise to say whether military intervention would work or not, but we had fears for what would happen if it did not. There were those endless hours—so they seemed at the time and so they still seem now that they are done with forever—of sitting in the Tokyo Foreign Correspondents Club and listening to this and that correspondent just back from Saigon assuring us in great detail that we had only begun to fight, indeed that we hadn't begun yet but would begin next month. There was rich detail on how the fight ahead would be conducted, and rich optimism as to the outcome. Very well, give it a try.

For those who supported the Vietnam intervention, the result was a defeat as it was not for those who did not. Yet there was a certain relief. What had not really seemed matter for argument in the first place now ceased utterly to be, and we could sit back and see what would happen. It might not be a comfortable watch, but at least the air was clearer. When the vague apprehension, all along, had focused on something concrete, the something had been chiefly Japanese. Japan is a crucial part of the huge and complex economic machine which, for better or for worse, is our world, and in the new post-Vietnam world there are two places, the Straits of Malacca and Korea, where the interests of Japan might very immediately be affected. At least until Vietnam has pulled itself together and made itself what it must now inevitably become (the "now" is the chief thing which we who supported the intervention wished to forestall), much the most important country in continental Southeast Asia, not much seems likely to happen in the direction of the Straits.

So there is Korea. Those who accuse the President of South Korea of crying wolf for purposes of imposing ever more draconian measures tend to forget that the fable does not have much meaning in places where there are no wolves. There were and are savage wolves over the Korean land, and it is not easy to understand why in the early days after the debacle they did not spring. If the point is that the measures themselves are dangerous and that South Korea is a disciplined and motivated country that is prepared to fight for its existence without them, and indeed that the measures get in the way of preparedness and undermine determination—then it can certainly be argued. If on the other hand the point is that there is no danger, then many of us who like Korea and would like to have it around for a while simply cannot accept it. We *feel* the danger, right there in our vitals, even as we did in those summer months now a quarter of a century in the past.

It was not easy to see in the aftermath of Vietnam what would stop Kim Il Sung if he sprang, and the best explanation for his failure to spring is that, because God tempers the wind to the newshorn lamb, he was not able to. He needed help, and the greatest of postwar blessings, the Sino-Soviet rivalry, kept him from getting it. Now enough time has gone by and enough poise has been regained to give Kim Il Sung less confidence

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than he might once have had that South Korea is bereft of effective allies.

In deliberations about the present and future of Korea, the moral argument and the realistic argument once more hold sway. Bad governments are bad things, goes the moral argument, and one sins in giving them aid and comfort. Among the realists are those who in practical terms come to rather similar conclusions, their grounds for doing so being that Korea is not important to the United States. For those of us to whom an instinctive fear for Korea in the days after Vietnam was as important as any assurances about the capabilities of Comrade Kim and the inclinations of his friends, the most important thing now is to imagine what the Communization of the Korean peninsula would feel like. We have something very concrete to support our imaginings: evidence of how the Chinese felt about the reverse, the liberation of the peninsula from Communism, in 1950. The prospect filled them with horror, and they moved in massively to prevent its taking shape. The prospect of having Communist guns on the Tsushima Straits seems far worse than the prospect of keeping company for a time with an un-nice government.

If there *had* been trouble in Korea in those early post-Vietnam days, then the big thing to watch would have been whether South Korea was in fact without allies. The chief reason for the fear so vitally felt was of course that the United States could do very little and would do nothing. And what of the large, rich country so much nearer and more intimately involved? What might Japan have done? In those days of suspense when we waited for wolves the answer seemed cruelly simple: Japan would do nothing at all.

We do not know whether it was the right answer or not, for the most dramatic things that could have happened in the wake of Vietnam did not. Two things of considerable importance would seem to have happened, however: Korea has come to seem closer to Japan and the United States more remote and elusive. Japan has moved slightly to its own west.

For most Japanese, the new nearness of those Koreans is not entirely pleasant. The comic strip in the *Asahi Shimbun* on a recent evening had its hero, whose chief experience evening after evening is one of futility, carrying baskets of dirt across the land, west to east, Japan Sea to Pacific Ocean, to move Japan eastward. The immediate occasion for this exercise was Secretary Schlesinger's assurance that there are nuclear weapons in Korea. Two subjects people would prefer to stay away from were thus introduced into the discussion simultaneously, and the reaction was to wish for greater distance.

Another element is the next-to-universal feeling of superiority to Koreans, a feeling amounting in many cases to contempt, which is one of the facts of Japanese life. The Left fastidiously refuses to admit the presence of such feelings, leastways among *them,* and in the refusal may be a reason, though there are no doubt others, for a leftish refusal to admit other than peaceful intentions on the part of North Korea. Take the side of those Koreans at greatest remove, and Koreans nearer at hand may be scorned for the best of moral and political reasons.

Among Japanese of conservative persuasion the Korean question is one of those calculated to bring loss of composure. To them, the United States seems to be pressing action upon Japan; yet when Japan once did act in Korea and with most commendable results, it got its wrist slapped and was compelled to forgo the gains. To such Japanese it does not seem fair that Tokyo should be asked now to repair damage wrought by Washington thirty years ago. Such Japanese, if they are old enough, have seen it all coming for a very long time. They remember how America started having second thoughts about a disarmed Japan when trouble came up in Korea, and in a somewhat hypocritical manner told Japan that although naturally the "peace constitution" and the disarmed Japan which it called for were here to stay, it would be all right for Japan to have a "police reserve." In that police reserve was the beginning of Japanese rearmament, and to be told now that rearmament should go the whole distance because trouble is once again brewing in Korea—is too much. It is not for them, thank you. Washington made Japan withdraw from Korea and was instrumental in putting the peace constitution among the Sacred Books of the East. Let Washington do what is necessary to see that trouble does *not* brew and boil over, and desist from seeking to needle Japan into action.

The Japanese view of Korea has not always been what it is now. Feelings of superiority are of recent origin. It was through Korea that Chinese culture was brought to Japan upwards of a millennium ago, and until the last century Korea was still regarded, though with some ambivalence, as a teacher. There is a single Korean among the several hundred characters in *The Tale of Genji,* the great 11th-century romance. He is cast in the role of seer, and it is he who first takes note of the hero's extraordinary capabilities. The ambivalence is implicit in the motives for the principal premodern Japanese exercise in foreign aggression, the invasion of the continent in the late 16th century. To describe it as "the invasion of Korea" is to miss the point somewhat, if it implies that Korea was the main target. China was; Korea was the bridge, and to some people the main characteristic of a bridge is that it permits movement in two directions, a fact which lends credence to the view that China, at least for the time being, is happy enough with a divided Korea.

The Japanese image of Korea as a land of quarrelsome, unreliable bums is a product of the present

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century, when Korean inability to face the challenge of the West seemed to bring the Russians dangerously near, and when the Japanese imported an inelegant Korean minority to ease strains upon the labor force. Numbers of Koreans, among them a chewing-gum man, the Wrigley of Japan, have done very well, but the typical Korean is still to the typical Japanese quarrelsome and unreliable—the sort of person a fellow wouldn't want his sister to marry.

Most Koreans, in Japan or on the continent or wherever they may be, are perfectly aware of the Japanese view of them, and it only adds to their sense of isolation. It may be argued very persuasively that the repressive measures in South Korea are dangerous and unnecessary, and it may be argued persuasively too that the leaders of South Korea are doing what seems to them the only thing they can do. Among the things not commonly noted in Japanese and American reporting on Korea is that Japan has in some ways made the problem more difficult for those leaders. It is very easy for an American reporter to spend a few days in Korea—it is worth noting that there are no American reporters posted permanently to Korea—and observe that civil liberties are not ideally respected, but it is not easy to imagine the feelings of a government which has an enemy so near on one side that the sound of its guns one Sunday morning in 1950 was a disaster warning for the populace of Seoul, and which has on the other side a great mischief-maker (so it must feel), constantly spraying the south coast from its television antennas. The common view in Korea is that coast guards and security patrols must be of limited effectiveness while North Korea is in a position to bounce its agents off Japan, and there can be little doubt that this view is founded upon fact.

Then there are those television antennas, busy selling lipstick and detergents but symbolic of something important. During the brief period of parliamentary democracy after the overthrow of Syngman Rhee, a decade-and-a-half-ago, the Japanese Left came flooding in, preaching its simplistic message of peace and socialism, in its lexicon synonymous terms. It is easy for a Korean to acquire a reading knowledge of Japanese. Linguists have strict tests which two languages must pass before they can be proclaimed brethren, and not all the tests have yet been passed to the satisfaction of everyone; but to the non-specialist with some knowledge of both Japanese and Korean the two may seem as alike as identical twins. The systems of writing, in both cases a chimeric joining of Chinese and native elements, are asonishingly alike. What this amounts to is the potential for a *Kulturkampf* of massive proportions. The orthodoxy of the Japanese Left flooded the bookstores in those post-Rhee days, and the bright and diligent young Korean was not long deprived of access to its delights.

Perhaps Korea was not in serious danger then and would not be in much danger now; but there must have been insistent feelings in the breasts of many people, including the army officers who shortly indulged in a coup, that this would not do. It is often pointed out, and properly, that the Koreans are the only people in the whole world who have seen a Communist regime come and go, and that they should therefore be God's own anti-Communists. Not *all* Koreans had seen Communism come and go, however. A postwar generation was maturing in 1960 and 1961, and now it is approaching the age the young army officers themselves had reached at the time of the coup; and not even the worst trauma, such as a Communist invasion, can be counted upon to maintain discipline forever. So it must have seemed in 1960 and so it must seem today. Japan, secure in its islands and sure if ever a country could be of American support, could play with peace and socialism. Such dalliance was a luxury which Korea could not afford.

IF THE Vietnam debacle has brought Korea nearer Japan, it has done nothing to make the average Japanese think the Korean someone he really wants to be close to. Nor can it be said to have produced in Japan anything that can remotely be described as a new resolve, a galvanization. The sentimental Left goes on behaving much as it always has, and since it has always had messianic inclinations it begs to be excused from frittering away its time on lesser matters. When the messiah comes everything will fall into place. The big newspapers go on giving North Korea the benefit of all doubts and South Korea the benefit of none. As for the conservative who says that Washington created the problem and so Washington must solve it, the suggestions for specific action which can be coaxed from him tend to be such as one would expect from an economic animal. He will buy and sell his way through. He will save the South Korean by making him a part of the economic miracle, and as for North Korea—well, maybe something can be bought and sold there too, a loan floated, a credit established from the coils of which it would not be easy to squirm free. Japanese sales networks in Southeast Asia have been rather good at establishing Japan as an indispensable supplier; and what worked there might work on the peninsula, too.

None of this is very new, or very realistic. The chief political result of the Japanese defeat thirty years ago was a peculiar kind of isolationism; it has done good work, this quarter of a century, in bringing Japan to economic heights commonly described as miraculous and certainly without precedent, and it continues to be operative in the sense that Japan does not propose to be more of a presence in international politics than it has been all along. It has been a small, inconspicuous presence indeed. To be sure, its isolationism is

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very different from the American dream of withdrawing into continental fastnesses. There are no continental fastnesses to withdraw to, nor were there at the end of the American occupation any Maos or Khmer Rouge ideologues to impose pastoral self-sufficiency. Japan had to make its living by international economics. But international politics—this was quite another matter. Here the national genius for saying nothing at all asserted itself. (A nation of mute shopkeepers—sometimes that seems like "the real Japan.")

The heart of this peculiar isolationism has been the assumption that it is beyond the competence of the Japanese to do much about international politics, and that the energies of the nation must be turned to a career in international economics. Not even in the darkest days after the surrender did confidence in those energies disappear. Among the memories one cherishes is of the people who had failed at one thing and now, without tears or moans, set about having a try at something else.

PERHAPS the time has come to have a try at yet a third thing. The awareness that Korea is near and dangerous may signify the dawn of something important. The mere fact that Korea gets so much news coverage these days is evidence that the Japanese world is changing. Some fifteen or twenty years ago I heard the advice to his fellows of a very successful Japanese magazine editor: stay away from education and stay away from Korea—two subjects that produced in readers a measure of hostility, and a larger measure of boredom. Of late there has been a spate of headlines and articles on Korea, indicating that the rules have changed in the buzzing world of Japanese journalism. Mention of Korea no longer makes people yawn, whatever else it may do to them. A sudden renewal of interest in Okinawa is also significant. In the years after full sovereignty over Okinawa returned to Japan, Okinawa seemed to be falling sleepily into its traditional role as an impoverished region inhabited by people vaguely different from most Japanese—a sort of regional minority of which, like other minorities, it was in better taste not to speak. Now Okinawa is in the news again, partly because of Okinawan opposition to a visit by the Crown Prince and Princess, and partly because Okinawa is assumed to be the chief place from which the American watch over the peninsula is being maintained.

These are not perhaps very dramatic changes. It must still be the conclusion that if Kim Il Sung were to attack South Korea the Japanese would not do much of anything at all. Japanese military thinking seems to concentrate still on a holding action in the Japanese islands until help comes from outside. Indeed it is even possible that Japan would do less now than it did in 1950. Then it was under occupation and made no objection to the proceedings initiated by President Truman. Today a timid government might be moved by a vociferous Left to hamper similar proceedings were another American President to initiate them.

To many Japanese, of conservative tendencies, the passiveness of Japan in matters having to do with national security seems effeminate and unworthy, and at least for the sake of argument they almost seem to welcome the prospect of trouble in Korea. *Then* the Japanese government might be forced to act. The novelist Yukio Mishima, in the months before he killed himself, used to lament the incapacity of the Japanese Left to disturb the complacency of the government. The Left promised all manner of unpleasantness in 1970, when it became legally possible for Japan to denounce the Japanese-American Security Treaty, but did nothing at all, and so the government saw no need to dispense with the peace constitution. The view is similar today. *Something* is necessary to produce a more responsible foreign policy. The Vietnam debacle was not it. Maybe an invasion of Korea would be.

The argument is usually presented sardonically, for purposes of emphasizing the fecklessness of present policies, or the want of them. One wonders whether it would be advanced at all if the putative adversary were Russian or Russian-supported. In 1950 it was the Chinese who stepped in and rescued Comrade Kim, and people seem to imagine them in a similar role today. It is not easy for Japanese to be afraid of China, however hard they try. Two thousand years of history stand in the way. The first time the Japanese felt endangered from the continent, some seven hundred years ago, the threat was not at the hands of the Chinese but of a race that threatened and indeed conquered China. The second time, in the 19th century, it was the Russians, who upset a comfortable old balance. There is a tendency so strong that it almost seems instinctive: to hold, or feel, or believe, that if alien forces were eliminated once and for all the old balance would restore itself. Atomic tests in a remote corner of the Pacific arouse more indignation than atomic tests just across the Yellow Sea, and no doubt the reason, asserted less by the mind than by the heart, is that France is associated with the disruption of the old balance, China with its maintenance. It is possible, then, that not even a Chinese-sponsored invasion of South Korea would produce the desired galvanization. Japanese feelings toward China are often likened, and most appropriately, to American and English feelings toward Italy. We should be very sorry if the Italians were to go Communist, because we feel rather sure that they would not be happy; but no one would be much afraid that the Italians would come and bomb us.

If China worries Japanese conservatives at all, it is rather more for spiritual reasons than military. The threat to the Straits of Malacca and to Korea is still at a remove, and among the imponderables in any event, but there is one challenge to the Japanese way of life which must seem very real

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both to those who resist and to those who aid and abet it. A new kind of youth is emerging in Japan, upon whom China works a certain magic. For a young person the prospect of forty or fifty years of hard work in the service of the gross national product can be a rather bleak one, and the Chinese magic is of a primitivist sort, taking away the zest for work in the sophisticated organization wrought by economic miracles. Still, if the primitivist dream had not come from China, it would have come from somewhere else, no doubt, from the north woods of Michigan or the sands of Araby or the isles of Greece.

If Korea has come to seem nearer, America has come to seem farther away. As a consequence, the taboo upon talk of nuclear matters and Japanese nuclear capabilities is being violated more and more frequently.

All around the fringes of Asia the fall of Saigon generated waves of suspicion that an old assumption might no longer be valid. Bad things might happen, the assumption had been, but the United States was there to see, or at least to try to see, that the worst thing of all did not happen. In Japan too there has been a certain mild crisis of confidence. Early this summer the most important magazine in the country carried an anonymous article urging the case against ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It took as its starting point, not the uncertainty of America's proving faithful to its promises, but the near certainty that America would *not* keep its promises. To an American, and probably to most Japanese as well, this seemed rather extreme. Yet the fact that such an extreme assertion of American unreliability could be offered as the starting point for a serious argument in a serious magazine is interesting. Before the fall of Saigon the assumption of American reliability was made as unquestioningly by the anti-American Left as by the pro-American establishment.

The crisis in confidence, however, has hardly been of such proportions as to make the really important people come up with new plans and programs. The government goes on saying the same old things, and there is no reason to believe that it does not for the most part mean them, or that it is about to replace them by other things. The old things are the "three nuclear principles," that Japan will not possess, or manufacture, nuclear weapons and will not permit them to be brought into the country. There is a certain make-believe quality about at least one of the three principles. Few people who give much thought to the matter can really believe that before an American aircraft carrier puts into a Japanese port it leaves its nuclear weapons somewhere out at sea, and that after a visit it goes back to pick them up. The three principles are rather too impromptu and spontaneous, moreover, to deserve the designation "plans and programs." What happens is that the opposition asks questions on the floor of the Diet, and when the government offers what seem like plausible answers it finds itself with a policy on its hands. If it is pointed out that there is something a little irresponsible about relying on a dangerous umbrella which someone else must run the risk of storing—well, so there is a certain irresponsibility (and how nice that it is permitted).

Still, the discussion of nuclear matters is brisk as it has not been before. It centers upon the Non-Proliferation Treaty. No one of much consequence is advocating nuclear armament. Nor can it really be said that a debate is taking place. What is taking place is a classical palaver, with everyone talking in every direction. At the end of a *really* classical palaver a consensus emerges, mysteriously, when everyone has talked himself out. Probably that will happen this time too. People will agree either to forget the treaty or to let it have its way. The pragmatic quality of the discussion is refreshing, in any event, in this land where discussions tend to be dreamy and sentimental. Against the treaty it is urged that the American umbrella is not relied upon and that it is foolhardy to sign away possible alternatives (which means, of course, that some people *are* thinking of nuclear armament at some unspecified time in the future, even if they do not come out and say so). In favor of the treaty it is urged that Japan is more in need of nuclear energy for industrial purposes than most countries, and a failure to ratify the treaty might have the effect of shutting off or curtailing the nuclear fuel supply. Many other things, pro and con, are urged as well. Largely for nationalistic reasons, there is opposition to the treaty within the conservative party. The conservatives seem destined to govern for a very long time if they can hold themselves together, and a party split must be very nearly the last thing the prime minister wants. Yet it is always possible that we will wake up with a consensus some morning, and the treaty will be ratified.

And if the reverse consensus emerges, and an element in it, unstated perhaps, but recognized by everyone, has to do with reserving the option to arm with nuclear weapons, some day, on some occasion—what then? When might the day come, and what might the occasion be? One may imagine that, as Kim Il Sung turned over in his very private mind the possibilities of moving south, among the possible results that occurred to him was the unpleasant one of jarring the Japanese into a program of nuclear armament. On the list of countries that could produce atomic weapons if they chose to, one does not see North Korea. Whether or not it has the expertise, it does not have the money, and no one is going to provide it. Life is more pleasant with big umbrellas threatening one another from afar than with little umbrellas that can dodge between and under them. Though it does not seem likely that Japan would do much of anything to prevent the Communization of the Korean peninsula, that development might be

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just the thing needed to bring a new consensus into being.

THIS is the game of writing scenarios. They could be written in large numbers. Common to most scenarios which end with Japanese nuclear armament are two elements: a disquieting change in international affairs, and a failure of American courage and resolve. In the matter of whether or not there was such a failure in Vietnam, some people feel one way and some another. Almost everyone would make the same appraisal of inaction in a Korean crisis. Many Japanese think that Secretary Schlesinger's assurances have been directed at them as much as at the Koreans, and they may well be right.

None of the scenarists can be certain that a crisis of confidence, even of major proportions, would lead to the manufacture of atomic weapons: a claim to moral superiority based upon voluntary renunciation of nuclear weapons and upon the somewhat involuntary matter of having twice suffered nuclear bombardment is very dear to the Japanese. On the other hand, it is possible that a new consensus might emerge without the prerequisites of a crisis of confidence. The process of arriving at a consensus is very mysterious. In one's more fanciful moments one imagines the Japanese sending out and receiving signals all their own, like bats avoiding rocks and finding mosquitoes in pitch darkness. Until very recently a polluter's paradise, Japan now has anti-pollution laws among the most rigorous in the world, and they are enforced. Just recently the case of the director of the Yokohama harbor bureau was referred to the public prosecutor's office, the charges being that he had knowingly permitted massive pollution of the harbor. A few years ago one would have expected a conservative government heavily dependent upon contributions from business to do nothing at all about pollution. And then all of a sudden there were strict anti-pollution laws, strictly enforced. The costs to the businessmen who provide the conservative government with its daily bread are enormous; but most people, businessmen and politicians alike, seem to have agreed that the time had come.

A government prepared to act might find even tomorrow, even this evening, that it had a consensus. It might announce that, for defense purposes, it was conducting miniature tests. The parliamentary opposition would protest, in the interest of moral superiority, but the protest would be the dying fall of the palaver.

That is another possible scenario. What makes it extremely unlikely is the nature of Japanese leadership at the moment. A Chinese friend remarked recently, upon returning from visits to Seoul and Taipei: "Korea is suffering from the ailments of the young, Taiwan from the ailments of the old." The Japanese case is nearer the Taiwanese. The present prime minister and his most likely successors show geriatric symptoms. For those who think that inaction is good much of the time—just as they like to arise on many mornings and see that there is no news at all in the newspapers—they are pleasant symptoms. For those who may in secret be hankering after nuclear weapons, they are annoying and frustrating. To these latter a significant element in the scenario may be the emergence of a bolder and more youthful prime minister.

If there is a feeling that the locus of Japan has subtly moved westward, there is a feeling too that Japan has somehow grown bigger in the process. More eyes are turned upon it, the possibilities for concealment have diminished. For some the process of growing up is a pleasant one, meaning that there is new muscle to be thrown around; for others it is an unsettling one, meaning that security must be left behind and that difficult decisions must be made. Probably the latter feeling is the stronger with most Japanese, and it means that new adventures, such as the harboring of nuclear weapons, are not going to be launched upon with vigorous abandon.

The image of the giant aroused seems to be there, whether with fear or with anticipation, in the minds of those who ask what difference the Vietnam debacle made to the Japanese. A more honest and realistic image would be that of a giant who slumbers on, but who has had a new awareness or two insinuated into his pre-dawn dreams.

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Hannah Arendt's America

Nathan Glazer

HANNAH ARENDT is our teacher. First, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* she taught us about the great horror of our time; then, in *The Human Condition,* she taught us about how the Greeks understood the political life, and how different their understanding was from that of modern man, and how we had descended in our politics from seeking virtue and fame to seeking security and the good things of ordinary life. But in addition to these matters, she has also sought to instruct us on other themes—the question of the responsibility for the Nazi Holocaust (in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*) and the issues of American public life (in *Crises of the Republic*)—and as she has moved into these other themes, her teaching has for many of us become increasingly obscure.

A recent example of such obscurity is the address she delivered to the Boston Bicentennial Forum last spring and which she subsequently published as an article in the *New York Review of Books* under the title "Home to Roost."* Because Hannah Arendt is so influential a thinker, her reflections on America as it enters its bicentennial year must be taken very seriously; and indeed they have already been much acclaimed, despite their troubling obscurity.

In this address, Dr. Arendt exhorts us to face up to the facts of the many crises into which "this form of government and its institutions of liberty" have fallen—something, she says, we have been unwilling to do since the days of Joe McCarthy. Today, however, "all the chickens have come home to roost." The American defeat in Vietnam and the "ruin of the foreign policy of the United States" everywhere, combined "with our manifold domestic troubles," economic and political, are forcing us to confront the possibility that we may be standing "at one of those decisive turning points of history which separate whole eras from each other."

But, she continues, this facing up to the facts, difficult at best, is made all the more difficult by the invasion of our political life by "Madison Avenue tactics under the name of public relations." Such tactics were originally invented to serve the purposes of a consumer society "that could keep going only by changing into a huge waste economy," but they were extended into the political realm during the Vietnam war, when the government began lying to a degree reminiscent of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. The difference was that the totalitarian countries used terror to enforce their lies, whereas in the United States the method was "hidden persuasion" and the various practices summed up under the name of Watergate. "Watergate signified the invasion of criminality into the political processes of this country, but, compared to what already happened in this terrible century, its manifestations . . . were so mild that it was always difficult to take them altogether seriously." Nevertheless they were serious enough. In their aftermath, it looked for a moment as though the "image makers" would be dislodged, but now under Ford they are back again, trying to make us forget both Watergate and Vietnam.

Yet whatever the "image makers" do, Dr. Arendt goes on, they cannot succeed in wiping out the past altogether, especially since its consequences are so vividly present in the form of our current economic difficulties. These difficulties have their immediate origin in our defeat in Vietnam, but they are rooted ultimately in the fact that our economy has only avoided collapse since the Great Depression of the 30's through war and preparation for war—another fact we have been unwilling to face and that the "hidden persuaders" have done their best to prevent us from facing. Thus we can add the economy to Vietnam and Watergate as crises whose true nature we continue to be manipulated into evading by the techniques of Madison Avenue.

In exhorting us to face reality, Dr. Arendt cautions against a search for "deeper causes" and underlying trends "because it is in the nature of speculation about such hidden causes to hide and to make us forget the stark, naked brutality of facts, of things as they are." But if we take her advice, and apply it to this very essay, we find ourselves in immediate difficulties, for the simple reason that

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* June 26, 1975.

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many of the facts about American politics and the American economy that she cites are not facts at all. If the teaching in this essay remains obscure, the facts are not: they are often wrong.

THUS, to begin at the beginning, she tells us in her first paragraph that "one consequence of the McCarthy episode was the destruction of a reliable and devoted civil service, something relatively new in this country, probably the most important achievement of the Roosevelt administration." We know, of course, what Dr. Arendt has in mind here: the driving out of the diplomatic service of a good number of China experts, and the pall spread by security investigations through parts of the federal government. Had she said just that, we might still have had some details to argue about (how extensive was the pall? how responsible for it was McCarthy?). But she says much more, and what she says reflects a strange view of the relevant historical background. Roosevelt brought in a host of advisers, who spent shorter or longer periods in government, and who did not enter through the civil service but through political appointment, or through civil-service procedures which only lightly concealed the political character of the appointment. There were undoubtedly many more such appointments under Roosevelt than under previous administrations, simply because the size and scope of government in his time expanded so rapidly and into so many fields. For the same reason, the civil service itself also grew, and because of the Depression better men and women went into it than ever before, or since. But in what sense can this be called an "achievement" (let alone "the most important") of the Roosevelt administration, which, as is the case with most activist administrations, was more annoyed by than approving of the civil service and its restraints?

And however terrible Senator McCarthy was, it is a great exaggeration to say that he "destroyed" this civil service. Partly because of the huge influx into the government of all sorts of people during the New Deal—including, of course, Communists, socialists, and others—the question of Communism and Communist influence in government had been a preoccupation or obsession of Congress since the 30's, and had led to various kinds of security investigations and programs, before and after McCarthy. McCarthy himself was part of this story. He had almost no influence on the civil service dealing with domestic matters, and even his effect on how the civil service dealt with foreign affairs was minor. American policies in the 1950's and 1960's were determined not by fear of Senator McCarthy and his possible successors but by experience with Communist states and parties in various parts of the world, the concern in Congress and among the people in general with the Communist threat, and the outlooks of Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and their advisers.*

Reading the Watergate tapes, one gets the impression that the Nixon White House feared the FBI and that most permanent civil servant of all, J. Edgar Hoover, and even to some extent, while trying to use it, the CIA as well. Nor could Nixon's men do much with the IRS. None of these agencies had apparently yet been "destroyed" by anyone. Indeed, it was precisely because it could not "use" the FBI, and doubted how much it could "use" the CIA, that the Nixon inner circle set up its own group of investigators (scarcely the "secret service" that Dr. Arendt refers to). There is no intention here to justify this act, but it certainly has to be understood as being based in part on the fact that the regular agencies of government, the civil service, were not easily corruptible (though the political appointees who ran them could be controlled to a degree by the administration which had given them their jobs).

The character of the civil service in the post-McCarthy era is relevant to a further question that Dr. Arendt raises: why the men around Nixon who were not part of Watergate stuck with him to the bitter end. "The same uncomfortable question," she writes, "could of course, and with more justification, be asked about the men who surrounded and helped Hitler and Stalin." The answer to Dr. Arendt's question lies in the comparison she herself makes. There was indeed a "reliable and devoted civil service" in Washington, and they continued in their jobs, as could be said of the civil service under Hitler and Stalin. But here, surely, one must make a judgment—which Dr. Arendt surprisingly avoids making—as to the jobs in which they stayed: jobs which in the one case advanced the interests of totalitarian states, and which in the other case involved doing the daily work of a democratic state, including its fight against the expansion of totalitarianism. For the foreign policy of the United States—even as it tried to extricate itself from Vietnam, even as it looked with probably more than warranted suspicion on certain governments around the world that might be taken over by Communist parties—was the defense of democratic and other non-Communist societies. There was very often a myopic inability to distinguish among the broad variety of generally social-democratic governments. But the source of this confusion, it should be understood, was a deep and enduring concern with the important and unambiguous distinction between Communist states, in which no freedom existed, and just about all others.

Dr. Arendt, who has done so much to mark on the minds of a generation the true lineaments of

* On this entire question of the Congressional concern for Communists in government, and its relation to the huge increase in government officials and employees in the Roosevelt administration, see the balanced and scholarly study by Earl Latham, *The Communist Controversy in Washington* (Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 73-77, and throughout.

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totalitarianism, here nods in drawing the obvious distinction between totalitarianism and democracy herself—and not only in talking about America. Thus, having in the past forthrightly insisted on what German and Russian totalitarianism had in common, she does not in this essay see the difference between post-Nazi Germany and post-Stalin Russia. She tells us that "a political kind of image-making was introduced in both countries to cover up the unbelievable record of the past," adding the saving clause, "though in very different ways." But West Germany tried its war criminals, hundreds of them, and imprisoned them, and continues to do so. West Germany recognized a debt to Jews, and paid billions to Israel and to Jewish institutions and individuals to make whatever monetary restitution was possible for crimes that could not be made good. West Germany is a free country in which the horrible record of the past is constantly displayed, discussed, analyzed. West Germany, in short, is a democracy, while Russia remains a totalitarian state, in which no criminal of the Stalin period is accused and sentenced, in which no restitution is possible aside from minor corrections in the record of a false history, in which the past cannot be discussed.

IF THERE is a central theme in this essay which disdains the discussion of "deeper causes," it is the significance of images, which cover up "the stark, naked brutality of facts, of things as they are" in the United States. These images begin with the need to sell commodities, which has become the motor of a senseless society: "Much more decisive, however, . . . is the fact that Madison Avenue tactics have been permitted to invade our political life." The Pentagon papers, according to Dr. Arendt, demonstrate this invasion, for "they proved beyond doubt . . . that [the Vietnam war] was exclusively guided by the needs of a superpower to create for itself an *image* which would *convince* the world that it was indeed 'the mightiest power on earth.' "

This seems a strange misreading of the Pentagon papers, though one that is perhaps consistent with Dr. Arendt's tendency in this essay to overlook the role played by the realities of Communism in the shaping of American foreign policy. For one would have thought that the almost "exclusive" object of the Vietnam intervention was to prevent Communist states from conquering their non-Communist neighbors. Indeed, if we are to consider "naked" facts rather than the "deeper causes" proposed by various ideologues, it is this which, if anything, seems to have "exclusively guided" American foreign policy for thirty years. It explains our refusal to countenance the swallowing up of Berlin into East Germany, our military aid to Greece and Turkey, our creation of a Western military alliance, of alliances along the Asian frontiers of the great Communist states, our war in Korea, our maintenance of troops there, and so on.

There is no issue of the promotion of "images" in all this, or in the disastrous attempt to prop up South Vietnam and preserve it as a non-Communist state. There *is* after all a radical difference, in reality, having nothing to do with images, that Dr. Arendt well understands, between Communist—that is, totalitarian—states and other states, a difference of great significance. Dr. Arendt does not argue, as she well might have, that we were radically misguided (perhaps by "images") in the way we went about the defense of South Vietnam, that our defense became a travesty and may have damaged South Vietnam, in simple human terms, much more than any Communist conquest could have done. One could understand such an argument. What is incomprehensible, however, is that the entire objective of this intervention should have been forgotten, mislaid, so to speak, by Dr. Arendt, that she should have come to see the matter in such simple—and such mistaken—terms as the maintenance of our *image* as the "mightiest power on earth."*

Considering alternatives to her theory of the aim of our involvement in Vietnam, Dr. Arendt dismisses—quite properly—the possibility that it was "profit or power [or] anything so real as influence in Asia to serve particular tangible interests . . .," but the one aim that stares one in the face, the stated aim, the obvious one that nothing in the Pentagon papers contradicts—the containment of Communist power—is magisterially ignored as if it did not exist.

In one sense, undoubtedly, "images" were important in pursuing this objective: if the "image" of a power that would persist indefinitely in its refusal to allow the North Vietnamese Communists to conquer the South was projected forcefully and steadily and convincingly, it might persuade the North Vietnamese to desist. Thus image did serve policy, as the image of American reliability in the defense of Europe is meant to serve the objective of dissuading Russia from extending her control beyond the line that divides Germany in two. But it is a drastic and radical error to say that image alone was the *aim* of American policy: it served a policy that was devoted to a very tangible reality indeed, the holding of the line that divides Communist from non-Communist states.

* Elsewhere, in an essay entitled "Lying in Government," Dr. Arendt gives a more telling example of the role of images in the war in Vietnam: each of our Presidents of the 60's refused to recognize or accept defeat, to become "the first President to lose a war." They all therefore deceived themselves or gambled on an unlikely outcome (or even if likely, one against which a catastrophic alternative possibility had to be balanced). But this kind of thing happens less because of the increasing role of images in government than because of the pressures of electoral politics in a democracy. Leaders are constrained to weigh short-run developments which affect their chances of remaining in office much more heavily than long-run developments.

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If Dr. Arendt's naked facts are so faulty when she deals with topics that touch on totalitarianism, a subject on which she has given us so much wisdom, it is not surprising that her facts seem even odder when she comes to areas in which she is less at home, and in particular the problems of the American economy.

Here, too, she insists on the "obvious": "inflation and currency devaluations are inevitable after lost wars, and only an unwillingness to admit a disastrous defeat leads and misleads us into a futile search for 'deeper causes.' Only victory, together with the acquisition of new territories and reparations in a peace settlement, can make up the entirely unproductive expenses of war."

This is scarcely "obvious" to anyone who looks at the naked facts: Germany and Japan lost disastrous wars without acquiring new territories—indeed, they lost vast territories—and without getting reparations—indeed, they paid out huge reparations—but they have become the two strongest economies in the world, with the first least affected by the worldwide inflation, the second with an unparalleled record of economic growth. The costs of World War II to the United States were vastly greater than those of Vietnam, the "new territories" we acquired were expensive military bases, and instead of receiving reparations we spent great sums to rehabilitate our allies and former enemies; and yet we entered an unexampled period of prosperity that was scarcely broken for twenty-eight years. The costs of the Vietnam war were in *economic* terms (I leave aside political, social, human costs—they are not at issue here) relatively modest: at the peak they were perhaps double the annual costs to the United States of the quadrupling of the price of oil by the OPEC powers in 1973, an act unrelated to the Vietnam war, and one that might well have come to mind in any consideration of immediate and obvious rather than "deeper" causes of the sharp economic downturn in the United States and other free-market economies. The way we *handled* the economic costs of the Vietnam war undoubtedly contributed to inflation and other economic problems, but this was one factor among several: the huge deficits of the Nixon administration caused by increases in domestic expenditure; the rise of strong overseas competitors; the costs of environmental protection; and the oil-price rise.

Nor is the relation between economic prosperity and war as obvious as Dr. Arendt believes. It is true that the Depression only came to an end in Germany and the United States with preparations for World War II. But this says nothing about whether war and preparations for war are required to maintain employment today in the United States and nations with a similar economy. Japan, which spends almost nothing on defense, seems exempt from this requirement, as do the Western European countries, whose defense expenditures are considerably smaller as a proportion of the GNP than those of the United States, yet who seem to have enjoyed low unemployment until 1973 without resorting to increased defense expenditures.

Even in the United States it is questionable whether our substantial expenditures for arms and defense are necessary or essential to the maintenance of employment, and even more questionable that the unemployment factor plays any large role in maintaining expenditures at their present levels. Defense outlays fell from 8.4 per cent of GNP in 1964 (9.4 per cent in 1968, at the height of the Vietnam war expenditures) to 5.9 per cent in 1974, and even with scheduled increases in 1975 they are far below the figures of the early 1960's*: this, at a time when unemployment might well have been a spur, by Dr. Arendt's reasoning, to higher expenditures. It is hard to see any relationship between the ups and downs of the economy and employment, and the ups and downs of the defense budget: it is much easier to see a relationship between defense expenditures and such obvious facts as the Korean war, the Kennedy administration's desire to catch up with the Russians, the Vietnam war, and the end of the Vietnam war. What the naked facts tell us, in short, is that defense expenditures have in general been related to defense needs rather than to the state of the economy.

Relating unemployment to "automation," as Dr. Arendt does, is even more questionable. This idea goes back to the early 1960's, when it was believed that workers were being made superfluous by the new technology. But studies by the President's Commission on Automation and Technology showed that the replacement of labor by new machinery was a fairly steady feature of the American economy over a long period of time, and that by itself automation said nothing about the maintenance of employment: employment is maintained by the overall level of demand, which need in no way be affected by the rate of replacement of labor by new machinery. There is thus no evidence that "the debate over automation and employment quickly disappeared for the simple reason that 'featherbedding' and similar practices . . . [have] obscured and at least partly taken care of the problem." Instead, it would seem that the debate disappeared because, as the economy rapidly recovered after the tax cut of 1964, it became clear that it had been a misguided debate. Nor is there any evidence to show that an increase in featherbedding mitigated some special automation crisis, just as there is no evidence for a special automation crisis in the early 1960's. Admittedly in certain industries—particularly government service—workers were able with the help of unionization to improve their conditions, including a reduction in hours, but this is after all the kind of

* Edward N. Luttwak, "The Defense Budget and Israel," COMMENTARY, February 1975.

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improvement that one expects in a growing economy and is scarcely to be equated with an increase in featherbedding.

The issue here is how one evaluates the undoubted reality that a decline in defense expenditures will hurt employees in given industries and given areas, that people will fight for their jobs, and that the easiest way to accommodate their demands is to maintain unneeded production and unneeded bases. This of course happens; but to call it a *principal* cause of the general size or character of defense expenditure ("It is no secret," writes Dr. Arendt, "that a large proportion of the billions of dollars demanded by the Pentagon for the armament industry are necessary not for 'national security' but for keeping the economy from collapsing") is to take a minor factor and to make it central. It is as naive as the point of view of the critics of the "merchants of death" in the 30's, who believed that the sale of arms created wars, and that if the United States refused to sell arms to other countries we would be safe from war. War production has more substantial causes than the desire to maintain employment or keep up sales for arms: first come the situations that seem to nations sufficient reason for strengthening their military forces, and then come the arms purchases—though undoubtedly there is some influence the other way, too, from the "merchants of death," the professional military, and the managers of the economy who worry about the balance of payments and the level of employment.

There is a crucial and obvious missing element in Dr. Arendt's account of the relation between military expenditure and the economy, and that is the existence of real, not imagined, enemies, and real military threats. Wars are fought with real guns, artillery, shells, planes, and are won and lost, as in Korea and Vietnam, at least in part, because of the quality and availability of those arms. Israel was apparently about to be overwhelmed in 1973 because its Soviet-backed neighbors had a much greater store of the means of waging war, and were more readily resupplied by the Russians; Israel survived only because the United States was in the end willing to deplete its remarkably modest military stocks for Israel's defense. If liberals in Congress are now less sure than they were before October 1973 that the military budget should be cut, it is not because our economic situation is worse, but because the Yom Kippur war demonstrated that we have a considerably smaller store of the weapons needed for even small-scale wars than we thought we had. Totalitarianism, as Dr. Arendt well knows, is no image, but a reality. Neither is the enormous Soviet military establishment —with its plentiful and reckless supply of arms to any country that can serve its interests—an imaginary phenomenon.

If the United States now exports billions of dollars worth of arms, our balance of trade undoubtedly benefits, but this export in arms has grown for *political*, not economic, reasons. We provide arms to Iran and Saudi Arabia because we are trying to build our influence with those countries against that of Soviet Russia. We provide arms to Israel because we are committed to Israel's survival. We provide arms to Jordan and may provide them to Egypt to show our "even-handedness," to establish our influence with both sides in the Midde Eastern conflict, and to take advantage of what seems to be a falling-out between Egypt and Russia. We sent arms to Pakistan because we stupidly believed they would be used to defend Pakistan against Russia or China rather than, as it was quite clear they would be, against India, and we mean to send them again for reasons that are less comprehensible but have, once again, nothing to do with economics.

One may argue with one or another of these policies, but one cannot explain them by the simpleminded view that they hold down unemployment in the United States. The reasons in every case are political. This is not to say that to reduce our production of arms, or airplanes, or automobiles, would not lead to tremendous economic adjustments, or that we are particularly well-equipped to manage such adjustments. But economists are convinced that if demand is maintained, the fact that people want fewer or smaller cars or fewer arms does not mean an overall decline in employment, as the released demand flows into other areas—houses, or country homes, or expensive public transport systems, or swimming pools, or vacations, or what not.

DR. ARENDT'S effort to eschew deeper causes and concentrate on naked facts, then, leaves us confused: some of the facts are wrong, many are irrelevant, and we can beat no easy path from the naked facts as she presents them to the crisis of the Republic. One is even at a loss to understand just what she thinks the crisis of "this form of government and its institutions of liberty" consists of. The most space is given to Vietnam and to Watergate, which have undoubtedly been of enormous significance in reducing the prestige and power of the United States, the confidence of our citizenry in our institutions, the reputation of our government and society for wisdom and effectiveness. But do those things amount to a crisis of "our form of government and its institutions of liberty"? Dr. Arendt once "suspected," she tell us, "that Nixon was engaged in a calculated assault on the basic law of the land, with an attempt to abolish the Constitution and the institutions of liberty," but she now admits she was "misled," that what was involved was " 'only' the firm resolve to do away with any law that stood in the way of shifting designs inspired by greed and vindictiveness." Her original suspicion seems to me incredible, but even the present judgment is too strong. I see a pitiful effort, terribly destructive and damaging to the Presidency and the na-

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tion, by the President and his closest associates to cover up the evidence of the bugging of the Democratic party headquarters by Republicans. But a "firm resolve to do away with *any* law . . ."?

No one can argue with the long list of troubles, and deep troubles, with which we are afflicted, and which Dr. Arendt lists: Vietnam, Cyprus, Portugal, the Middle East, the Arab states, inflation, devaluation, the cities, unemployment, crime, NATO, Italy, England, India, détente, nuclear arms. . . . But many of these problems have nothing to do with our form of government and the state of our institutions of liberty; and as to others, their connection with our form of government and the institutions of liberty is difficult to discern, and Dr. Arendt gives us no help in doing so.

My own tendency is to see the crisis less as one of a threat *to* the forms of government and the institutions of liberty than as one *of* the forms of government and the institutions of liberty, owing to the increasing complexity of the issues that government either must deal with or is forced to try to deal with, under the pressure of democratic political competition. This is combined with an incredible *elaboration* of the institutions of liberty, of formal procedures that should be reserved for the public realm and for limited areas of human activity, but have now been extended to greater and greater ranges of it. This explosion of the institutions of liberty (quite different from a threat *to* liberty) means that courts cannot properly administer justice, schools cannot maintain discipline, universities cannot maintain standards, services cannot operate effectively, the realm of production and distribution is saddled with requirements for a formal justice that make it inefficient, and governments at various levels cannot govern. Newly created rights come into conflict with older rights and expectations: to meet the needs of the non-working poor adequately from their point of view is to be unjust to the working near-poor and the taxpayer; to expand the rights of the accused and the imprisoned is to reduce the security of the law-abiding; to provide some minority groups with what appears to them their just share of jobs and education is to be unjust to individuals in other groups, etc., etc.

To my mind, it is this view of the crisis of the Republic to which close attention to the naked facts must lead us. By giving credence to other facts, so many of which are ill-supported by easily available evidence, Dr. Arendt is led into a different view. How could this have happened?

One explanation occurs to me: Dr. Arendt, we know from her other works and this essay, fears the effect on a republican polity of the ordinary life of ordinary people whose daily round prevents them from participating in the demanding work of active citizenship, and who can thus easily slip into acquiescing in the great crimes of government. It is valuable indeed to be reminded of how the ordinary or the "banal" can be linked to the horrible, and she reminds us again here: "At such moments in history when the writing on the wall becomes too frightening, most people flee to the reassurance of everyday life with its unchanging, pressing demands." One must agree with Dr. Arendt: that is what most people do even when there is no writing on the wall, perhaps particularly when there is no writing on the wall. One suspects it was so even in the glorious days of the founding of the American Republic, and perhaps it was even so in the great days of the Greek polis, if "most people" are taken to include the strangers and the slaves. Dr. Arendt refuses to reconcile herself to this condition, and it is one of her great virtues that she does not.

But if the crisis of the Republic consists in part in the fact that most people withdraw their concern from the great and terrible events, refuse to be informed or to participate, are enveloped in the banality of everyday life, and are manipulated by lies and public relations, then we have an extremely curious paradox: for it is *just* on the issues which most clearly mark the failures of government—Vietnam, Watergate, and the economy—that the *most* information and analysis come through the channels of communication, and, moreover, making points not very different from those that Dr. Arendt herself makes. She could not possibly disagree with the main direction of information and opinion and analysis on Vietnam and Watergate emerging from the mass media—they were her own (though she would find less in the regular flow of media information that agreed with her views on the economy). Thus the people are told what Dr. Arendt would on the whole want them to be told. She sees her voice as unique, and of course in respect to her knowledge and understanding and the distinctiveness of her style it is; but where she comes out on current issues is exactly where the ordinary liberal or progressive opinion of the moment comes out, an opinion against which almost nothing can stand today. She sees the special problem of the Republic as consisting of how people in their ordinary lives are to be related to the great tasks of government; but the tasks to which she calls them and the way she understands these tasks are very similar to what we would find in the informed mass media, and the liberal majority of Congress.

Why then do the people refuse to respond as she does? Why do they not rise above banality and take an active part in the determination of policy and the course of government? The answer is that they do, but in ways Dr. Arendt does not recognize or does not approve. For her naked facts are not theirs: they do not see as sharp a threat to our form of government and the institutions of liberty, despite the efforts of the mass media to persuade them of the existence of such a threat. They have certainly heard what Dr. Arendt has heard—who could not?—but they also remember, in their

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stubbornly immobile way, what she seems to have forgotten: that we were in Vietnam to fight Communism, and that to accord an unconditional amnesty to those who refused the duties of citizenship is to be unjust to those who accepted them and suffered for it. It is because of President Ford's refusal to grant unconditional amnesty to those who fled the draft or deserted, because he granted a pardon to President Nixon, because he is basically in his policies and attitudes a successor to the President who was destroyed by Watergate, and because a large proportion of the people are not ready to condemn the successor to the President they elected, that Dr. Arendt sees the crisis of the Republic as continuing in full gravity.

I BELIEVE that Dr. Arendt is right in her understanding of the relationship between the ordinary person today and the great needs of public life. The citizen actively engaged in public life and concerned for the state as a whole—whether we consider that an ideal, or a reality that was actual at certain glorious moments in history—has been replaced, it is true, by the job-holder, the bureaucrat, the family man, doing his work in a market-oriented, consumption-oriented, image-making society. And thus while awful things can be happening up above, at the level where the affairs of state are directed, the people can still go about their business, imprisoned by the ordinary and the banal, even when their daily business consists of shuffling the papers and producing the means for killing other ordinary people, whether in concentration camps or Vietnam. If most people can, by going about their ordinary lives, contribute to and sustain the most terrible crimes, then there is nothing distinctive about Germany, and nothing distinctive about America, to explain why totalitarianism could happen in the one, and why it will not happen in the second.

This, finally, seems to be the implicit message of Dr. Arendt's bicentennial reflections on America. The deeper causes of totalitarianism are to be found in certain modern social developments which are as ominously present in postwar America as they were in prewar Germany. Like the deeper causes Dr. Arendt herself cautions us against in another context, however, this one can blind us, as it often blinds Dr. Arendt, to many of the naked facts which point not to similarities between prewar Germany and postwar America but to crucial differences. I agree with Dr. Arendt that unbelievable things have already happened, and that even more unbelievable things are at least possible. But considering the naked, brutal facts of Vietnam and Watergate, I can find little to suggest —and neither, indeed, does Dr. Arendt herself when she discusses what was *actually* revealed in the Watergate tapes—that those in charge of the state in any way aimed at the destruction of republican government; and I find little in the actual behavior of the American people to indicate that they were so sunk in ordinary life that they would not have reacted long before any such threat were to have become manifest.

Thus, on the nature of totalitarianism as it developed in Nazi Germany, Hannah Arendt remains our teacher. She also remains our teacher on the political dangers of ordinary life under modern social conditions. But on the application of those teachings to the issues of contemporary America, and to the crisis of American government, she continues to be misleading and obscure, both in her apprehension of the facts and in her view of what the facts tell us about the realities of our situation today.

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Herzl's Fate

Dan Jacobson

In its general outline the story or legend of Theodor Herzl is well-known. Once upon a time there was a Viennese-Jewish dandy and *littérateur* who had established a reputation as a gifted but rather frivolous playwright and journalist. As a correspondent for the famous Vienna daily, *Neue Freie Presse*, he was given the task of covering the Dreyfus trial in Paris. The anti-Semitic outbursts which the trial produced from every level of French society, supposedly the most enlightened in Europe, shocked him into a new awareness of his own Jewishness, which had hitherto meant little to him, and of the dangers which confronted the entire Jewish people. In this state of shock he hurriedly composed his most famous book, *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question;* then he went on immediately to create, almost single-handedly, a political movement dedicated to bringing into being the state which his book had proposed. Nine years later, at the age of forty-four, he was dead, having utterly exhausted himself in constant effort on behalf of his great cause. Initially he was derided as a madman and visionary both by Jews he was trying to save and by the Gentiles whose support he tried to solicit. Today his portrait hangs in the chamber of the Israel parliament (the Knesset) in Jerusalem; on a hilltop nearby, which bears his name and which overlooks the city, his body lies enshrined.

By and large, this legend is accurate, as Amos Elon's compendious and candid biography reveals.* The legend does contain some errors of fact (e.g., Herzl had become much preoccupied with "the Jewish question" well before the Dreyfus trial began), and more errors of emphasis (e.g., the idea of political Zionism was not as dramatically novel, when Herzl proposed it, as the folk-memory would suggest). Nevertheless, one of the great virtues of Elon's biography is that it demonstrates just how much unfamiliar and embarrassing detail the legend is capable of incorporating without losing its essential shape. Parts of Elon's book, especially those which attempt to convey the appearance and atmosphere of Herzl's Vienna and Paris, are anxiously overwritten; for the rest the job is done admirably. All the facts are laid out lucidly, and Herzl is allowed to speak for himself as much as possible. One reads the story with a singular mixture of wonder and embarrassment; in the end it becomes difficult to tell the one emotion from the other.

Why embarrassment? Well, take the only son of a well-to-do Jewish family; admire him extravagantly, indulge his every whim, and prophesy constantly to him that some day he will be a great man; teach him virtually nothing about Judaism, Jewish history, or the Hebrew language; let him grow up moody, lonely, and "poetic" in his aspirations; fill him with banal, enlightened notions about progress, science, and the universal brotherhood of man; encourage in him a multitude of snobberies, including a wholehearted contempt for commerce and a self-abasing admiration for all that is most aristocratic and exclusive in the culture and society around him; let him yearn from afar for blond, blue-eyed Gentile girls; inculcate in him a sentimental attachment to the history and language of the country he lives in; and, finally, curse him with ambitions that far outstrip his talents . . . and what have you got? The father of a nation? Or any one of half-a-dozen people you might have known at school or university?

Of course, these familiar characteristics and tendencies took the coloration of their time and place, and expressed themselves accordingly. Herzl did everything that was expected of him. He joined a students' dueling club and was struck about the face in traditional style. He composed fervent pan-German nationalist hymns. He patronized *grisettes* and got a dose of the clap. He wrote plays which he submitted for production to the Viennese theaters. He considered committing suicide, at some length. In copious notes, diaries, letters, and essays, which are both excruciatingly self-conscious and childishly self-betraying, he solemnly recorded his reflections and impulses, as befitted the important writer he intended to become. "Although," wrote the Budapest-born youngster to his parents, who were then living in Vienna, "there are many Viennese and Budapest Jews here [in a holiday resort] the rest of the vacationing population is very pleasant." In loftier mood, perhaps even admitting Viennese and Budapest Jews within his conspectus, he confided to his diary, "Nothing on earth, or very little, deserves our wrath. With disdain and pity it is possible . . . to get on very well in the world." Or, "At the sound of music, sweet intoxicating dreams of future fame and glory envelop my drunken heart." Or, "I do not carry a great work within me. Break your pen, poor devil!" Or, simply, "To be blond is everything."

Such posturings and schemings, vanities and predictable torments, cannot be set apart from the deeper strains and compulsions of

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* *Herzl,* Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 448 pp., $15.00.

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his nature, or from his response to the griefs and disappointments life inflicted upon him. Toward the end of his adolescence his only sister, whom he adored, died suddenly of typhoid fever; some years later he wrote a passage of sardonic self-analysis, almost worthy of Dickens's David Copperfield or Pip, of how he had behaved at the time. His devotion to his parents, always intense, became positively sickly after his sister's death. His enduring isolation from his contemporaries was a fact as well as a pose. The striking success he enjoyed as a journalist, and the far more modest degree of recognition he achieved as a playwright, did not assuage his feeling that he had failed to justify his literary ambitions. When, in his late twenties, he married a wealthy, pretty, and hopelessly unstable girl, the marriage promptly turned bad and became a source of constant misery to him. His melancholy, which had once been almost soothing, a proof of the refinement of his sensibility ("I can only be happy when I am absolutely miserable"), settled into a real affliction. Even his vanity about his personal appearance had its oddly somber or significant aspects.

The last point is worth dwelling on, if only because it shows how inextricably confused in Herzl's case (as in so many others) were those "accidental" or "trivial" circumstances which we so rarely link with the birth of major political and ideological movements. Would Herzl have become a Zionist if he had been as "blond" as he obviously wished to be? I very much doubt it. Consider the difficulty of his position. On the one hand he was (and was proud to be) a man of the most striking appearance. Tall, handsome, upright, dignified in his bearing, he was noticed at once in any group in which he found himself. But the looks which drew attention to him were as far from his own ideal of pure, blond Teutonic knighthood as it would be possible to imagine. His skin was olive, his hair and beard were black, his nose was large, his eyes were dark and deep. He looked like a prince, indeed—a Prince of Judah. Or perhaps of Assyria. (In the later pictures, including the one hanging in the Knesset building, his resemblance to a figure from ancient Assyrian statuary is quite remarkable.) So what was he to do, given his preoccupation with his appearance? Forgo the special destiny he seemed to have been marked out for? Or find some unprecedented way of fulfilling it?

THE painful and intricate relationship between certain forms of "Jewish self-hatred" and Zionism has never perhaps been more clearly demonstrated than in the life of the founder of the movement. This is not to suggest that all the bafflements and blockages suffered by Herzl were a direct consequence of his position as a Jew. Still less is it to belittle his terrible and all too accurate perception of the catastrophic situation in which European Jewry would sooner or later find itself. If he was driven to try to reconstruct imaginatively the future of an entire people, it was because the tensions and contradictions within him had become as intolerable as the provocations of history; it was because he had reached a point where he could no longer make a distinction between his pride and the wounds inflicted upon it, or between his injured self and the injured group he belonged to.

In a matter of weeks—weeks of sleeplessness, scribblings, loneliness, incoherent wanderings through the streets and parks of Paris—Herzl was swept away by his sudden vision of the Jewish people sovereign once again in a country of its own. During that period of exaltation he transformed himself irrevocably from a hurt and haughty man of letters into the would-be Moses of his people. It was a transformation that was eventually to cost him everything: family, fortune, life. "I think," he wrote, "for me life has ended and world-history has begun. . . . At night it burns within me when my eyes are closed; I cannot hide from it."

From that point onward, it might be supposed, the reader of his biography should begin to feel wonder and admiration only, tinged perhaps with pity. But embarrassment persists too. The truth is that we are inclined to nourish sentimental notions of what obsessions, manias, madnesses, even drug-trances, can do to the people possessed by them. (Some of the writing on the subject reminds one of those old comic-book advertisements: "I was a 90 lb. emotional and intellectual weakling until I discovered . . . MADNESS!") To compare Herzl's seizure by the Zionist idea with an attack of madness is of course grossly unfair. But it is equally unfair to expect him somehow to have been able to step forward completely newborn out of the shell of himself. The astonishing energies that were released as a result of his discovery of the Zionist cause had to make do with the mental resources and emotional habits which had always been his; he simply had no others.

Thus, his determination to find a solution to "the Jewish question" was heralded by two flamboyant, absurd ideas which he wrote about with almost the same fervor he later showed on behalf of the establishment of a Jewish state. His first proposal was that he, Herzl, should challenge some of the leading anti-Semites of the day to a series of duels: in this way he would prove to them that the Jews were brave and gentlemanly. His next brainwave was for a series of immense pageants to be staged in every capital of Europe, in the course of which the Jews would undergo mass conversions to Christianity. (But *noblesse oblige:* the leaders of the movement, Herzl included, would not be converted; they would continue to bear the stigma of being Jewish in order to prove how disinterested and pure their motives were in leading their people to take this step.)

THE Zionist idea, as events proved, was very different from these grotesque false starts. What is more, Herzl knew it at once. But his touchiness, his passionate desire to cut a figure, the shallowness of much of his thinking about society and history, his acquiescence in many of the beliefs anti-Semites held about Jews, his concern with medals and decorations, the difficulty he had in cooperating with

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others, the mixture of naiveté and self-consciousness which had always characterized him—he did not shed any of these when he became the demoniacally driven leader of a people. His yearning admiration for Prussian Junkers and English aristocrats did not diminish; on the contrary, as a result of his political campaigning he met more members of both classes than before, and reveled in doing so. The blueprints he projected for his Zion-to-be were jejune: all electricity, brass bands, and well-dressed ladies and gentlemen conversing in German amid elegant Mediterranean townscapes. Though he had the largeness of spirit to recognize the strengths of East European Jewry, of whom he had been quite ignorant before, he never wholly reconciled himself to the fact that it was these despised *Ostjuden* who really rallied to him, not the classier Jews of the West.

The unconsciously clownish aspects of his character, which pursued him throughout his own pursuit of grandeur, like some mocking shadow or anti-self, must affect our sense of the tragedy and heroism of the last stage of his life. However, they should not really diminish it. The idea of a reborn Jewish commonwealth was more daring in its historical sweep, and more desperate in its prospects, than any other of the nationalist movements which sprang up in Europe during the 19th century; perhaps the best way of indicating Herzl's strength of will is to say that it measured up fully to the daring and desperation of the cause. One marvels, as one goes through the second half of the tale told by his biographer, at his energy and obduracy; his courage in the face of repeated heartbreaks and rebuffs; the boldness of the political feats of sleight-of-hand he attempted to carry off; his readiness to sacrifice his personal wealth; his calm acceptance of the fact that the pace he was going at was bound to kill him, and his refusal to be slowed down by this consideration; his willingness to open himself to new experiences and new perceptions right to the end of his career; the tirelessness with which he would follow up any idea, no matter [redacted] on any journey, however distant and exhausting, which might be of help in the struggle.

Essentially his campaigns were all fought on two fronts simultaneously. On the one hand he had to try, through some spectacular success in his dealings with the great powers of the day, to convince the Jews of Europe that he had indeed found a solution to their problems, and that it would be worth their while to support him. On the other hand, in his meetings with kings, sultans, popes, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and assorted notables in a host of countries, he had to pretend that the support he was seeking from the Jews was already his, and that as a result he had at his command millions of followers and (no less important) millions of francs or marks or pounds sterling.

On both fronts his successes were few and far between. The Zionists he managed to gather around him were neither numerous nor wealthy; they hardly made up for these lacks by being given to interminable caucusing and bitter personal rivalries. He was cold-shouldered by the wealthy Jewish philanthropists, like the Rothschilds and the Hirschs, without whom his prospects of raising large sums of money were nil. The rabbis from one side, and the Jewish socialists from the other, fought him tooth and nail. Setting up his organization in these unpropitious circumstances, he at the same time negotiated endlessly with the Sultan of Turkey, who then ruled Palestine; this meant throwing bribes wholesale down the bottomless pit of the Sultan's court. (For which the financial managers of the Zionist movement denounced him.) He discussed with Joseph Chamberlain, the British Colonial Secretary, the possibility of the Jews' establishing a new "Zion" in Uganda, Cyprus, or Sinai. (For which the "Palestine-only" faction among the Zionists reviled him.) To the outrage of the Russian Jews he met the anti-Semitic Czarist minister, Plehve, and tried to canvas his support. All his schemes and travels, meetings and negotiations, came to naught. At the end of nine years he had nothing to show for his efforts but a noisy and penniless Zionist organization, with almost as many factions as it had branches or committees. On his deathbed, in delirium, he pointed at a particular spot on the bedclothes and instructed his secretary, "*This* piece of land—the National Fund must buy it."

LET a single example of his frantic, fruitless endeavors, taken from one of the most amusing and saddest chapters in Elon's biography, stand for all the rest. The Kaiser, who had Middle Eastern ambitions, announced that he was going on a pilgrimage to Palestine. Herzl, who had been working for years to interest the Kaiser in his plans, hoped in some ill-defined fashion that as a result of this journey the Sultan would grant the Kaiser a protectorate over Palestine; and that he in turn would obligingly grant the Zionists a charter enabling them to settle there and begin building the Jewish state. Through various intermediaries, some well-intentioned, some malicious, Herzl was given to understand that it would be a good thing if he were to petition the Kaiser to that effect in Jerusalem itself. Off he rushed, in a state of euphoric expectation, to await the Kaiser's arrival in Palestine. En route he had a bad fall on the ship's gangway and injured his leg. Then he caught a fever. The heat in Palestine, which he was visiting for the first time, overwhelmed him. Turkish secret policemen followed him and his colleagues everywhere. The tiny Jewish colonies he visited were poverty-stricken and unwelcoming. (*They* did not believe in his political fantasies, and were ready to continue living indefinitely on Baron Rothschild's charity.) His foot swollen, his temperature mounting steadily, subject to attacks of vomiting, irritated beyond endurance by the dust and heat, he awaited the Kaiser's arrival outside an agricultural college called Mikve Israel (the Hope of Israel). When the Kaiser arrived, in a huge mounted party, he exchanged a few bland words with Herzl; then rode on.

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Everybody followed the imperial cavalcade to Jerusalem. The filth and smells of the Old City disgusted Herzl. After five days of waiting, he and his friends were summoned to see the Kaiser again. Sweltering in their formal court dress, the deputation came and said its piece. The Kaiser made some politely discouraging remarks in response and the audience was over. Nothing had been said about charters or protectorates or the return of the Jews to Palestine. Nor was a word said about any of these matters in the few lines devoted to the meeting in the official report on the pilgrimage. The Empress smiled pleasantly at Herzl, but said to her confidantes that what she didn't like about Jerusalem was that there were "so many filthy Jews" to be seen there. End of chapter; end of years of careful planning and much less careful hoping by Herzl. Back to the Sultan. Back to the British. Back to Lord Rothschild. Back to face a disappointed and bitterly critical Zionist Congress.

ONE of the photographs in the book shows Herzl, sun helmet in hand, waiting for the Kaiser outside Mikve Israel. He wears a dark suit. He stands quite alone, but gazes toward the horizon like the commander of an army. There is nothing nearby but barren sand and an incongruous kitchen chair; in the background is a dispiriting huddle of Arab-style huts. The forlorn pathos of the photograph is difficult to describe; or even to contemplate.

In fact, that picture reminded me vaguely of the old illustrations I used to come across, during my schooldays in South Africa, of worthies of one sort or another proclaiming republics, negotiating treaties with bemused blacks, or solemnly extending the Queen's territories by means of a flag and a declaration. Why should Herzl have imagined that Palestine or the Middle East would be any different from the Africa of his day? No wonder he thought of a potentate like the Kaiser as of some kind of *deus ex machina,* dispensing charters and protectorates to suitable applicants: the years of his most intense political activity coincided almost exactly with the "Scramble for Africa," when an entire continent was carved up almost effortlessly among the European powers. No wonder, too, that he was so interested in the career of that arch-Scrambler, Cecil John Rhodes, Prime Minister of the then-British Cape Colony, and tried repeatedly to get in touch with him. But while Englishmen like Rhodes, as well as Belgians, Frenchmen, Germans, and the rest had armies and navies to deploy, Herzl had only his own preposterous dignity to depend on. (So dignified was he, indeed, that he had had eyes only for the Kaiser; none for the Arabs who actually occupied the land.) Which makes it all the more remarkable that today the state for the sake of which he stood in the sun actually exists, however precariously, while all those empires have melted away.

Herzl did not even have any money at his disposal. However unfair it may be to compare men so differently placed from each other, the contrast with Rhodes is again instructive, in one respect at least. Rhodes, who succeeded in dragging the British government in London into one imperial adventure after another, did not even begin his political career until he had amassed a huge fortune in the South African diamond and gold fields. He had had no shame in setting out quite deliberately to make a fortune, with the express intention of using it later to further his political ambitions. Herzl, the Jew, could never have gone about things in that way. He despised moneymaking: among other reasons because it was so "Jewish." He was too aristocratic in his tastes. He wanted to be an author and gentleman. The result? Once in politics, he was constantly having to go cap-in-hand to those unsympathetic Jewish magnates who had shown themselves less delicate in their sensibilities than he; and he was never able to make the offer of hard cash to the Sultan which he believed (perhaps wrongly) might have made a crucial difference to their negotiations.

The involutions and ironies of Herzl's fate as a man, a writer, and a leader, do not end there. It was precisely that delicate and wounded sensibility of his which eventually drove him into politics, where he revealed how much steel there was in his character. And, paradoxically enough, it was his brutally "unaesthetic" and unrewarding political life which provided him with the materials and the passions to write the one book which can today sustain the reader's interest, when all the rest of the literary work he set so much store by has turned to dross and tedium. I refer not to *The Jewish State,* which is merely an outdated pamphlet, a call to action, but to the series of private diaries he began when his obsession took hold of him. To the first of them he prefixed the bold title: *Book One: Of the Jewish Cause: Begun in Paris: Around Pentecost 1895.* It is extraordinary how, throughout the years that followed, with all their disappointments and failures, plans that miscarried and childish dreams he never realized, he managed to maintain something of the tone of electric excitement we find in its opening paragraph:

> For some time I have been occupied with a work of infinite grandeur. At the moment I do not know if I will carry it through. It looks like a mighty dream. But for days and weeks it has possessed me beyond the limits of my consciousness; it accompanies me wherever I go, hovers behind my ordinary talk, looks over my shoulder at my comically trivial journalistic work, disturbs me and intoxicates me.

In the Epilogue to his absorbing book, Elon reminds us that below Herzl's tomb, on the hill which bears his name, stretches one of the largest military cemeteries in Israel. There lie the bodies of many hundreds of young men killed in successive wars, defending the state he did so much to call into being. On the western slope of the hill is the Yad Vashem, the memorial to the six million Jews of Europe whom the state came into existence too late to save.

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Trashville

William S. Pechter

WHY make a film about—and full of—country music, if you don't like it? I ask this not as any devotee of country music myself, well over nine-tenths of what I've heard of it striking me as a pile of lachrymose slop. But any film crammed with some 25 country-music original numbers ought, statistically, to hit on one that's better than pathetic. Even a nonentity like *W.W. and the Dixie Dancekings* (whose principal characters are involved with a country-music band) manages to pull one attractive original tune out of its hat for its finale.

Nor do I ask the question rhetorically. There *is* a reason to make a movie about country music when you don't like it (and don't like the people who create it, and don't like the people who like it), and that reason is exemplified in Robert Altman's *Nashville*. It's a reason for which even a knowledge of the country-music milieu isn't required: Altman has himself admitted he wasn't familiar with the Nashville scene before he decided to do this job on it (his method of remedying his ignorance consisting of dispatching a henchperson, Joan Tewkesbury, to Nashville to write the script, and then casting almost all the singing roles with non-musicians who were allowed to compose their own songs). For it's not the music that this country-music epic is after; what it's after is the country that's microcosmically revealed in America's (at least, Middle America's) "music capital." ("You get your hair cut! You don't belong in Nashville!" one of Nashville's leading citizens barks at a young musician early on.) The true locale and subject of this film—which begins with a song declaring, "We must be doing something right/ To last 200 years," and ends with a crowd singing, "You may say, I ain't free/It don't worry me" following an assassination—clearly isn't Nashville but nothing less than America itself: America as it really is, stripped of myth and idealization, on this eve of its bicentennial celebration.

The subject is one almost all of Altman's previous films can be seen as leading up to, from the anti-militarist, "anti-war" jibes of *M*A*S*H* through the anti-capitalist ironies of *McCabe & Mrs. Miller* and that film's debunking of romantic myths (and the similar myth-puncturing of *The Long Goodbye* and *Thieves Like Us*) to the depiction of a rootless society in *California Split*. And as befits a work of such vast ambition, Altman's new film seems to draw stylistically as well as thematically on elements of all his films before. A sound truck, broadcasting speeches by a Presidential candidate, wends its way through *Nashville*, and its use as a motif reminds one of the public-address system announcing the showing of war movies in *M*A*S*H*, while that earlier film's closing announcement of itself as the camp's coming attraction is echoed in this one's clever, self-referential, TV-commercial-style opening credits; a *Brewster McCloud*'s many-stranded plot line and cross-section view of the life of a Southern city now seems to adumbrate the use of such things in *Nashville*. From *The Long Goodbye* and *Thieves Like Us* comes the busy detailing of the inundation of American life with the debased currency of our popular culture; from a *California Split*, *Nashville*'s rapid tempo and subtly garish visual style, and the evocation by such means of its characters' lives of transience and anomie.

Nashville, as its publicity loudly proclaims, portrays the lives of no fewer than 24 characters in the course of a five-day period during which they go their various ways and their fortunes occasionally intertwine within the contours of the city's music industry. Much has been made of the virtuoso accomplishment of the juggling of so many story lines, but, though the purely technical feat of keeping them all in motion without much confusion is impressive, their actual substance is something else again. Tom (of the folk-rock trio Bill, Mary, and Tom) is having an affair with Mary, Bill's wife, while at the same time trying to seduce Linnea, the gospel-singer wife of Delbert, a lawyer whose clients include some of Nashville's biggest stars, one of whom, Barbara Jean, only just released from her hospitalization for burns from a "fire baton," seems on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and is watched adoringly from afar by Glenn, a young soldier whose mother once saved Barbara Jean's life in a fire, and so forth, and so on, as the Nashville world turns.

One can, of course, synopsize almost any plot to the point of banality; but, in *Nashville*, it's not a case of the transcendence of such banality by the work's imaginative freshness but of a concealment of the banality by the restless and incessant cutting away from one banal plot to another. Zero in on any half-dozen of *Nashville*'s 24 characters' stories, and their impoverishment would be obvious; once again, a bill of goods is being sold on the dubious principle that the losses incurred on each item can be reversed by volume merchandising. And indeed, despite all the ballyhoo about *Nashville*'s audacious originality in featuring 24 leading characters, one could as easily maintain that the film has *no* leading characters, only 24 actors doing their turns (all doing them well, without in the least extending themselves), much as one

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might say the same of a film like *California Split*, whose leading "characters" number two. In any case, what might be truly audacious would be not this *Grand Hotel*-ish engineering but the kind of freedom in moving from one character to another, following them and then leaving them behind as they enter into the work's development, that one sees in Buñuel's *The Phantom of Liberté*. *Nashville* may seem refreshingly free of rigid plotting as it's unfolding, but by the time virtually all of its characters have been assembled and their stories converge for the O. Henry-like denouement, one is struck less by the film's freedom of movement than by the ingenuity of its preparation for its payoff.

BUT for all the noises to be heard about *Nashville*'s Joycean complexities, the extraordinary critical acclaim which has greeted the film has, I think, really very little to do with such things. And the barrage of media hype elicited by *Nashville* (which may well exceed that for any other film since *Last Tango in Paris*) *is* exceptional, even given the semi-hysterical masterpiece-a-month mania with which film reviewing is afflicted. This month, *Nashville*; last month, *Shampoo*; the month before, part two of *The Godfather*. What these widely differing films have in common has nothing to do with a like degree of artistic achievement, or stylistic mastery—but they *do* have something in common. Nor is it *Nashville*'s artistic superiority which accounts for the extravagant heights to which it has been praised (though I could myself argue a preference for the fleet fluidity and lightness of *Nashville*'s style to *Godfather II*'s monumentality). Rather, *Godfather II* wears its heart, a bit too earnestly and exposedly, on its sleeve, while in *Shampoo* one can't entirely shake nagging questions as to whether there's any necessary relation between the personal and the political. But what Altman has constructed in *Nashville* is an all but perfect vehicle—resembling nothing so much as a work of pornography which sanctimoniously (but sincerely) preaches against pornography—for simultaneously feeling superior to "America" and exploiting the appeal of everything he invites us to join him in feeling superior to.

What in fact *Nashville* amounts to specifically, with the spectacle of its horde of hayseed characters seen in all their malice, venality, and scrambling opportunism, is the movies' biggest bout of hick-baiting since *A Face in the Crowd* (a film with which *Nashville* shares such other features as its crude "satire" of commercials—"Goo-goo Candy Clusters," hawked at the Grand Ole Opry—and the way its loathing for the yokels' stars is exceeded by that for the stars' audience, seen, in *Nashville*, to turn angrily on Barbara Jean, its erstwhile favorite, when, obviously distressed, she falters in a performance). Strictly as a depiction of corruption in the country-music business, there's nothing in *Nashville* that wasn't done at least as trenchantly and knowingly (if with less stylistic virtuosity) in *Payday* of a year or two ago, with its portrayal by Rip Torn of an egomaniacal Country and Western singer. But what distinguishes *Nashville* from such a genre study is the later film's scope; and lest one imagine that the corruption of *Nashville's* characters has no larger relevance, a message which issues from the sound truck that weaves through *Nashville* informs us early on that we're all deeply involved with "politics," whether we know it or not, in whatever we do.

That sound truck broadcasts statements by Hal Phillip Walker, a kind of all-purpose third-party (the Replacement party) candidate for President (the truck emerges from a garage whose door bears the cryptic legend, "Walker-Talker-Sleeper"), at a rally for whom the film's climactic assassination takes place. (The rally is held in front of an actual replica of the Parthenon, originally constructed out of plaster of Paris for Nashville's centennial celebration, which has earned the city its appellation of the "Athens of the South.") Though the assassin, an Arthur Bremer-like loner, is presumably gunning for Walker himself, he settles instead for the troubled Barbara Jean, who is entertaining the crowd in preparation for the candidate's appearance. (Why the assassin chooses this target is left unexplained, though those with lively imaginations may speculate on the possible relation between the killer's domineering mother and the singer's just having finished a paean to "My Mommy and My Daddy and My Idaho Home." Or perhaps since, as the candidate's advance man explains, "The thing with these country people is they've got grass-roots appeal; they're the one's who'll elect the next President," one might as well shoot the entertainers as the candidates.) In any case, no sooner do the shots ring out than Nashville's leading star steps forward to forestall panic with assurances that "This isn't Dallas—this is Nashville!" as indeed it is. Nashville is Dallas plus Memphis plus Los Angeles plus Laurel plus . . . By now, that is to say, assassinations have become so routinely woven into the fabric of American life that we can immediately close ranks (as the show goes on, a new star is born, and a *Patton*-like monster flag waves conspicuously) to affirm, "You may say, I ain't free. It don't worry me."

Now whatever my reservations about the version *Nashville* presents of "America," it's not primarily here that my deepest reservations about the film reside. For just as one can appreciate a work of art whose vision of the world one doesn't share, so, too, can I without difficulty conceive of admiring a film whose view of America is different, even radically different, from my own. (I assume, for the sake of argument, that I hold some stable and statesmanly "view" of America rather than the volatile bundle of violent contraries which my feelings actually comprise.) Indeed, the body of work—Sam Peckinpah's—which I find most interesting in the contemporary American film offers a vision of America a good deal blacker, if also more ambiguous, than anything that's implied by *Nashville* or in any of the other films of Altman. Insofar as *Nashville* is engaged in an act of trashing America, I feel no compulsion to defend anything against it. To

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the extent that America is equatable, as the film would have it, with chauvinistic and pathetic country music, crunched cars, plastic motels, and Kentucky Fried Chicken, the movie's targets can fend for themselves; to the extent that it isn't, such derision as *Nashville*'s will hardly undo it.

But when one populates a work of art with numerous characters toward whom one's salient if not sole attitude is a contemptuous condescension, one is involved, I think, in trashing of a different and more deeply offensive sort. To be sure, there are a few of *Nashville*'s characters in whose depiction one might discern some warmth of feeling: the much abused Barbara Jean ("I don't tell you how to sing—don't you tell me how to run your life!" her manager-husband snaps at her); a talentless, would-be singer whom we see stuffing tissue paper in her bra as she perfects her stage manner in the mirror amid a clutter of religious figurines, and whose fantasies of a career lead her to having to perform a humiliating striptease at a political smoker; a (white) gospel-singing mother of two deaf children (who presumably gets points also for singing not country music but gospel, with a black back-up chorus, though her voice wouldn't pass muster in the most meager storefront-church choir). Here as elsewhere one sees that streak of morbid sentimentality in Altman's work which allows him to extend compassion only to the damaged and doomed, and which seems related to the ritualistic slaughter of an innocent with which so many of his films end. (To be fair, he didn't specify that *Nashville* end with Barbara Jean's death when he commissioned Joan Tewkesbury's script; he only requested that it end with the death of someone.) The deaf children, in particular, are produced by the film with all the perfunctory piety of Verdoux's family. And as if they didn't in themselves convey pathos enough, they're stuck with a father who, in contrast with their mother, hasn't even bothered to learn the sign language needed to communicate with them.

What was for me the single most affecting moment in *Nashville* drew, I suppose, on a pathos of such sort: the look on Keenan Wynn's face when he's offhandedly informed by a disinterested nurse that his hospitalized wife has "expired" during the night (though it's hard for me to distinguish how much I was moved by Wynn's portrayal of the character's reaction to the situation and how much by the shock of seeing Keenan Wynn himself looking so genuinely old and frail). Wynn begins to utter a cry of grief, when Altman cuts abruptly—the effect is like a slap in the face—to the supercilious laughter of the cast's two "outsiders": an asinine BBC interviewer, in Nashville to gather material for a documentary, and the clean-cut, buttoned-down advance man for the third-party candidate, rounding up local talent for the rally because "this redneck music is very popular now." These two characters are, if anything, portrayed with even more scorn than Nashville's inhabitants, as if to disarm any criticism that Altman's view is, in fact, indistinguishable from theirs. At one point, Altman stages a multi-vehicle freeway pileup, and has the interviewer exclaim of the collision, "I need something like this for my documentary—I need it! It's America—those cars crashing!" At another, she visits an automobile graveyard, and, later, a school-bus parking lot, so that Altman can milk these things for their symbolic worth while at the same time mocking the interviewer's fatuous commentary on them. (The implicit values and level of sophistication from which the film looks down its nose at the Nashville world are more undisguisedly embodied in the figures of Elliott Gould and Julie Christie, who make guest appearances playing themselves as vis-

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iting [redacted], with the natives either fawning on them laughably or, what's worse, not knowing for which film the latter won her Oscar.)

But despite the smoke screen with which Altman habitually surrounds his work—his appealingly modest claims that his films aren't "saying anything," their slightly stoned air of "partying," and his letting the individual participants work out their own contribution for themselves—it clearly is no one else, least of all the BBC interviewer or the advance man, who, to score a cheap irony, shunts aside Wynn's grief-stricken outcry; it is Altman himself. And when you thus trash not just your subject but your own characters and their emotions, you lay yourself open to criticism which goes beyond questions of stylistic virtuosity and artistic finesse. What's revealed in such a moment is a coarseness of sensibility, an ugliness, of a kind one glimpses at moments in a number of Altman's films: in the mob's humiliation of the priggish nurse in *M*A*S*H*, the intimidation of the transvestite in *California Split*, the mocking radio adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* in *Thieves Like Us*. At moments such as these, and others like them, questions of artistic finesse tend to recede before purely human considerations. This isn't to say that such things cancel out the considerable talents which Altman's films display; nor would I want categorically to dismiss his films on the basis of such deficiencies in feeling, though to do so would be, I think, a more honest acknowledgment of what his work is about than to gloss over such things in the stampede to praise its artistry. But if one can hardly hope at this late date to head off the stampede, one can still choose, at least, not to join it. To the extent that one sees everything in *Nashville* as at once cheapened by easy ridicule and rife with a hypocritical exploitation of the "grass-roots appeal" of "these country people" and their "redneck music" for purposes of Altman's own vote-getting campaign, one can choose to turn away and vote, "No."

Seymour Martin Lipset and David Riesman

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Books in Review

Libertarianism Without Law

ANARCHY, STATE, AND UTOPIA. By ROBERT NOZICK. *Basic Books. 367 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by JOSIAH LEE AUSPITZ

For better or worse, academic philosophers are intent on deepening our discussion of political and moral issues. After a generation in which questions of logic and scientific method have preoccupied the dominant, analytic school of American philosophy, tenured professors are now interested in applying their newly honed conceptual tools to the predicament of man in society, and there appears to be an audience for their writings. The publication of John Rawls's cumbersome *A Theory of Justice* surprised Harvard University Press four years ago by becoming its best seller. The success of the book in the marketplace, as well as the high esteem in which Rawls is held by his colleagues and students, has spawned a cottage industry of criticism and commentary on Rawls's "ideal contractualism," which has been misread in some quarters as a doctrine for levelers.*

Now one of Rawls's Harvard colleagues, singled out for mention three times in the final page of acknowledgments to *A Theory of Justice,* has entered the lists with a self-labeled libertarian work that joins issue with Rawls at several points but which, as befits an attempt at original theory, approaches the problems of justice and the state from a fresh perspective. Though Robert Nozick devotes some fifty pages to a critique of Rawls, his ambitious book, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia,* is intended to stand on its own. That it succeeds in doing so has been almost unanimously acknowledged. From the day of its publication the book has been celebrated. One of Nozick's colleagues on the editorial board of *Philosophy and Public Affairs,* the organ of the new wave of public philosophers, promptly acclaimed the author in *Harper's* for his unsurpassed dialectical skill. Another public philosopher, in a long essay in the *New York Review of Books,* applauded his "razor-sharp analysis." Tardier reviewers in the general press have tended to confirm these judgments. Though some have disputed Nozick's libertarian ideology and regretted his ignorance of social theory, history, and political thought, not even the most hostile has contested his technical proficiency. The National Book Award of 1975 in Religion and Philosophy has completed the popular certification of Nozick's book as an enduring contribution to American political philosophy. Far more impressive in professional circles is the evidence in the acknowledgments and on the dust-jacket that W. V. Quine, the dean of American logicians, submitted helpful written comments on the entire manuscript and found the final product "brilliant and important."

Hence it behooves us to consider *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* as a work of philosophy should be considered—not by whether we like its conclusions, nor by whether we approve of its author's bibliography, but by whether it forces its arguments upon us. In philosophy, it is not the destination that counts, but how one gets there. If Nozick in fact reaches a libertarian philosophy by a logically compelling route then we must, like it or not, entertain his conclusions until they are superseded. If he somehow fails, then the respectful reception accorded *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* by his professional colleagues must lead us to reconsider the terms on which academic philosophers have lately been addressing themselves to public affairs.

In its main outline, Nozick's case is not difficult to follow, though it is presented inelegantly, with long digressions (e.g., on vegetarianism), and an unflagging prolixity in refuting the kind of objection likely to be posed by the fatuous freshman or journalist. First, Nozick argues (*contra* the anarchist) that the modern state, with its claim to monopolize the legitimate use of force, is a moral necessity. If it did not exist, something like it would arise, as if by an invisible hand, from the moral requirement of protecting property and respecting individual rights. Property holders would hire a protective agency to guard their holdings. The agency would monopolize a territory, extending its services to those who do not pay for them to preempt the field from independent enforcers. It would then begin to feel toward its clients the same sense of moral obligation that they feel toward each other. In time, a minimal state—the "night-watchman state" of classical liberal theory—would emerge without any formal social agreement constituting its powers.

Second, Nozick contends that a more extensive state than this cannot be justified. The only redistributive taxation which is logically required by the nature of the state is for the protection of property. Any other redistributive activity is unjustifiably coercive. To base arguments for state intervention on some prior social compact is implausible, for an invisible-hand model of the state enables him to assert that the pattern of state power is no more the product of conscious, collective agreement than the pattern of traffic on a given Saturday night. He constructs a utopia, rather like the

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* The one book-length critique of Rawls, however, Brian Barry's *The Liberal Theory of Justice,* points out accurately that despite the book's egalitarian rhetoric it explicitly ranks the principle of liberty ahead of all others, so that libertarian conditions must be fully satisfied before any others can come into play.

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Marxian "withering away of the state," to show that the minimal state is not at all disagreeable. In it people do their own thing, a thousand flowers bloom, and there are no laws or taxes beyond those required to support the police.

It follows from Nozick's argument that the whole panoply of state activities as we know them—from conscription to child-labor laws to welfare benefits, public services, economic management, and rockets to the moon—are illegitimate. Such activities, Nozick argues, can be supported by voluntary subscription of free property-owners but not by taxation, which infringes on the individual's property rights, and hence his liberty.

It speaks well of the reception of this radically non-interventionist book that it has been civil and intellectual, a marked change from the often vituperative treatment that a few years ago greeted Edward C. Banfield's considerably more moderate *The Unheavenly City*. But it speaks less well for the professors who have given it lengthy reviews in popular journals that in the effort to be gentlemanly they have for the most part neglected the threshold question of whether Nozick's book deserves to be taken seriously as an important theoretical contribution.

Every writer in philosophy must subscribe to a few ground rules, and Nozick accepts the most basic of these: that one must articulate an understanding of what one is doing and then do it in a coherent way. He devotes the better part of his first two chapters to telling us what he thinks an adequate theory must accomplish in any realm of human conduct. Before dealing with his explicitly political arguments, therefore, it is essential to give his view of the proper method the prominence he gives it. Then we shall see not only what he attempts but how utterly he fails.

ACCORDING to Nozick, we cannot hope to understand any realm of human conduct by dealing with it on its own terms. We must explain it in terms of "fundamental" concepts that make "no use of any

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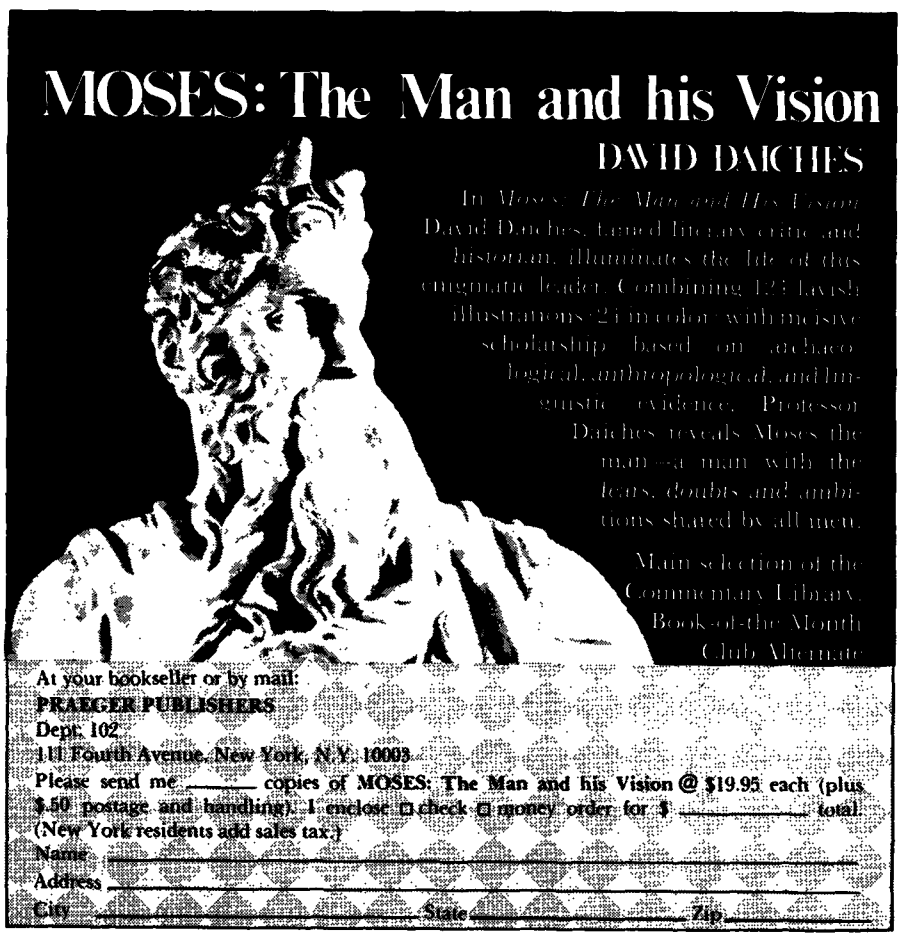
of the notions of the realm" itself. "Only via such explanations can we explain and hence understand everything about a realm; the less our explanations use notions constituting what is to be explained, the more *(ceteris paribus)* we understand." Especially illuminating, Nozick believes, are "invisible-hand" models which explain outcomes as generated in a patterned way by the mechanics of unintended consequences. Even if one knows an invisible-hand model to be based on error ("fact-defective"), on false generalization ("law-defective"), or on a fictitious linkage of events ("process-defective"), it is better to posit a hypothetical mechanism than to try to explain any realm of human conduct in terms of "desires, wants, beliefs, and so on." "Even wildly false initial conditions will illuminate, sometimes very greatly," for they at least give us a hypothetical pattern against which to view the otherwise seamless web of human intentions. Only such an approach, Nozick assures us, promises "a full understanding of the whole political realm."

This view gains authority for Nozick by its fruitfulness in the exact sciences where it has the virtue of avoiding circular reasoning. If we reduce politics to something other than the political, we are, if nothing else, sure to avoid tautology. Nozick asserts the scope and power of reductionist methods sweepingly—the only gesture at judiciousness is a footnote excluding the invisible hands of witches, ghosts, and goblins—yet, as it turns out, he follows his strictures for less than half the book. He uses his reductionist techniques only to revise John Locke's derivation of the minimal or "night-watchman" state from the acts of isolated individuals in a state of nature. The methodological weakness of Locke, by Nozick's standards, is that he posits a conscious political act—the social contract—as a prelude to legitimate political community. In so doing he errs doubly, by explaining a political institution in terms of something political and by using a conscious social agreement to explain a phenomenon which, like all phenomena, can only be satisfactorily understood in terms of an invisible-hand mechanism.

As WE have noted, Nozick corrects these Lockean lapses by showing that a "legitimate" minimal state might arise from the minute acts of individuals who pay a dominant protective association to safeguard their property. The six chapters devoted to this demonstration and the method behind it are a *tour de force* of microeconomic construction with only one serious flaw: the assumption that a Wackenhut enterprise in a state of nature will feel the same sense of obligation toward the consumers of its services that they as moral individuals feel toward one another. It is far more likely, as the example of the Sicilian Mafia suggests, that it would treat only its paying customers "morally," and those in accordance with their most recent cash payments. But since the morality of the protective agency is clearly labeled as an assumption, its use affects only the plausibility, not the internal consistency, of Nozick's model, and does nothing to undercut his claim: he has provided a fact-defective, law-defective, process-defective, invisible-hand model of the state as emerging without either a social contract or an intelligent design.

But he abandons this style of presentation abruptly when he comes to discuss justice within the state. Here he slips unawares into a rival doctrine of explanation. To understand justice, he now avers, we must know what people mean and have meant by it. We must see it in terms of past desires, wants, beliefs, and so on. A division of property is just if it has come about in a just manner: "whatever arises from a just situation by just steps is itself just." Specifically, Nozick proposes a three-pronged "entitlement theory" of justice.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An individual is entitled to holdings if they were, in the first place, acquired in accordance with principles that seem just. (Nozick declines to elaborate whether these principles are eternal or whether it is sufficient that they were thought just at the time the property was acquired.) Second, property is justly held if it was transferred to an individual by just means by someone who acquired it justly. (He sees force and fraud as unjust means of transfer.) Third, a holding is just if it is acquired by a rectification of past injustices in acquisition and transfer. (He is aware that the question of who is entitled to carry out this rectification is highly problematical.)

The entitlement theory of justice, sketched in three short pages, is Nozick's beacon for the entire second part of the book. He believes it enables him to prove that no state more extensive than the minimal state can be justified. It is based on principles of reasoning that he calls "historical," by which he presumably means that they make use of fact and precedent after the manner of a lawyer, not that they enable us to interpret and understand events after the manner of a historian. He uses his "historical" principles to criticize "structural," "current-time-slice," and "patterned" approaches, of which John Rawls's theory is his prime example. Such theories err in proposing a model for distributive justice in terms of some fundamental principle (equality, merit, etc.) other than past judgments about justice. Justice, like love, Nozick believes, can only be understood in terms of "what has actually occurred." He also finds of insufficient historical accuracy the Marxist theory which explains the existing distribution of property in terms of the mechanism of economic exploitation. The more a theory of distributive justice uses notions of procedural justice, he now seems to be saying, the more *(ceteris paribus)* it enables us to understand.

Though he prides himself on his candor in acknowledging small weaknesses in his arguments, he

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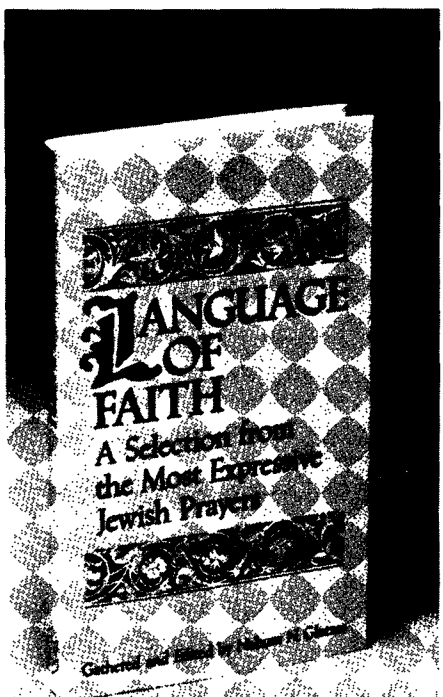

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seems genuinely innocent of the theoretical thrust of his two main points: the fact-defective habits of model-building he has blithely pressed upon us in the first part of his book are at the root of the ahistorical mentality he attacks in the second part. And the kinds of explanation he brands as tautological in discussing the state are precisely those he introduces in discussing justice. If the history of the acquisition and transfer of property is essential to understanding legitimate entitlements, why isn't the history of the state essential to understanding legitimate taxation and intervention? And if, *per contra*, we must use a reductionist method to lay bare the fundamental structure of the state, why not use a similar method to view justice within the state? Since Nozick proposes no adequate answer to these questions, one cannot accept his work as a coherent, enduring, or even plausible contribution to political philosophy. To the extent that either his "fundamental" theory of the state or his "historical" theory of justice cut deeply, they cut against each other.

WOULD that they were as effective in advancing the cause of liberty as they are in devastating each other. For there would be nothing more salutary than to establish on philosophical grounds a presumption against the unexamined accretion of state power and state spending. But the most disappointing thing about Nozick's book for the reader inclined toward limited government is that it also falls short of providing an adequate exercise in libertarian argumentation. Here looser standards apply. Instead of ascertaining whether Nozick's arguments hang together, we can ask whether, taken individually, they enable him to advance the cause of libertarianism.

That some aspect of the cause is worth advancing few would deny, for libertarianism taps deep strains in American political culture—the suspicion of bureaucracy, the safeguarding of individual rights, the respect for privacy and private property, and the sanctity of free expression. Libertarians of the Left tend to emphasize civil liberties, those of the Right free-market economics, but all share the enduring American faith in inalienable rights and a horror of coercive government. Most libertarians are comfortable with Lockean individualism in political thought and respect a mathematically formulated reductionism in philosophical analysis. (Locke himself accepted mathematical statements as the most precise, simple, and universal.) As a gifted decision theorist accustomed to writing *more mathematico*, Nozick holds out the prospect of providing analytic underpinnings for libertarian thought. If Nozick's arguments are not telling, then there is some deep deficiency in the habits of rigorous logical analysis in dealing with issues of moral and political philosophy.

There is, we must report, a deep deficiency in the habits of rigorous logical analysis in dealing with moral and political philosophy. The mark of the careful logician is to define precisely his terms and to build up a system from discrete and mutually exclusive categories. Within such a system statements can be judged either true or false, with no shadings or anomalies between these two poles of truth value. Unfortunately, the concepts of political and moral philosophy have precarious boundaries. They are less like separate pieces on a checker board than overlapping circles, or, better still, interpenetrating spheres of uncertain dimension. If one defines concepts like legitimacy and coercion or liberty and equality as mutually exclusive, one is led into elementary errors. Moreover, in politics and morals we deal not merely with different preferences of individuals but with wildly different conceptual frameworks. A proposition that will seem false, meaningless, or trivial from one point of view will seem a fundamental truth from another (for example, Nozick's own dogmatic assertion that "all individuals have rights" would be counted unprovable from a strictly empirical point of view). Hence a two-valued logical system, which attempts to distinguish

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unequivocally true propositions from false and to put all basic concepts in watertight compartments, will lead one not merely into an inability to see the nuance and texture of the moral life but also into a trained incapacity to weigh the conflicting claims that are the stuff of politics.

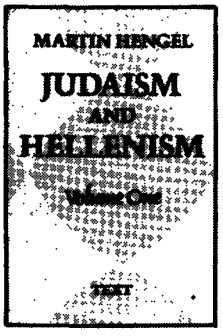
MODERN mathematics is not without tools with which to represent the complex reasoning that prevails in practical life. But W. V. Quine, who has helped develop some of these tools, has asserted in his own *Philosophy of Logic* that real set theory and multivalued logic must be excluded on formal grounds from orthodox texts. Thus, if one limits oneself to the approved textbook methods of a Quine, one is "logically" unfitted for dealing philosophically with questions of morals and politics.

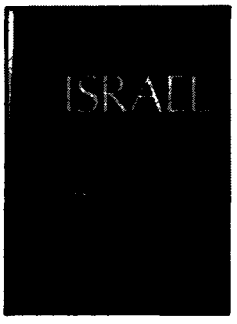
It was an appreciation of such difficulties that led Ludwig Wittgenstein in his formalist phase to advise careful logicians to remain silent on issues for which they had no adequate notation. And it explains why any serious attempt to deal philosophically with politics must involve either a revolt against logical formalism or the acceptance of the more demanding task of broadening the canons of formal discourse Nozick has attempted neither of these projects. Instead, he has simply extrapolated into the political realm the habits that have served him so well as a decision theorist.

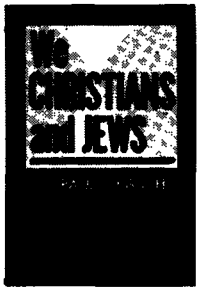
A thoroughgoing libertarianism has the virtue of enabling him to stay closer to his training than almost any other political position, save perhaps thoroughgoing skepticism. The libertarian's belief in the inviolability of moral personality translates nicely into a view of the individual as a "circumscribed area in moral space." Relations between individuals then become "boundary crossings." Any attempt to aggregate individuals and treat them as members of "society" can be rejected as a fallacy of composition. And any intervention by society in the rights of individuals can be seen in both a moral and logical sense as untenable.

Up to a point such simplifications are useful. They result in an increased sensitivity to that realm in which individuals may be viewed as self-contained, in which trust, community, and solidarity between them are either impossible or irrelevant, and in which all civil relations must be formally specified. Since politics must deal with this realm, a political philosopher can go far by combining textbook logic with a doctrine of atomistic individualism.

But not quite far enough. For just as philosophically there is a gray area in which concepts interpenetrate, there is also sociologically a gray area in which individuals share common beliefs, interact, and shape each other's personalities and preferences. One might argue that this realm is not relevant to political philosophy, which must







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confine itself to formal legal relations, but one cannot plausibly make this argument without setting one's initial terms to take account of what one is excluding. To neglect such niceties is not to provide a purer but a more vulnerable statement of the libertarian position.

WERE these conceptual faults unique to Nozick, his book would hardly be worth mentioning. But the reception of the book suggests that it is part of a clearing of the throat in which others will present their positions in like manner. Two errors which Nozick makes are so widely shared that they stamp not only the character of his book but of much American intellectual discourse about politics: he rigorously uses legitimacy as a concept which excludes coercion, and, more loosely, treats liberty as a concept which excludes equality. The flower-child in each of us will share with him the first error and the jejune logician will be attracted to the second.

On the nature of coercion, Nozick is an acknowledged authority. His widely admired essay on the subject, first published in 1969, shows how rigorous logical analysis may properly be used to sharpen the philosopher's use of individual concepts. The essay, which he views as preparation for the maturer formulations of his current book, distinguishes the conditions of coercion from those of inducement and deterrence. Coercion, Nozick says, always involves a threat, which is understood as such by the person coerced and is intended to alter his conduct. Where offers rather than threats are used to induce the alteration in conduct we have manipulation of incentives without coercion. Where a combination of threats and offers is used the situation can be called partially coercive. Where the threat of force is present but is part of an impersonal system not directed at altering the conduct of a given agent, we have deterrence but not coercion. Nozick is so meticulous in establishing these and related distinctions that one could hardly expect him to address explicitly in his essay the more complex conditions under which law is coercive.

But this issue haunts him in his new book, much of which is a truly eccentric attempt to cast law into a coercion-free mold. Using his old terminology, we can see that if law could have the character of an impersonal system of rules-of-the-game it would "deter" without coercing. If, on the other hand, it were a direct exercise of collective will designed to alter the conduct of a specifiable class of individuals it would partake of coercion. To be legitimate—and Nozick is consistent in using legitimacy to exclude any prior element of coercion—law must somehow be purged of the exercise of willed negative incentives, a problem different from eliminating the exercise of arbitrary will. Nozick seems aware that his old terms are not quite equal to this. Much of what he was once able to call deterrents he now recognizes as legal "prohibitions" which fall into a category that he continues to view as at least potentially coercive. The new problem for him is to turn negative incentives into positive ones and thereby transmute potential coercion into inducement or some other morally neutral process. This he does by introducing a "principle of compensation" which he puts at the foundation of the legal system in opposition to the "principle of fairness" and other juridical doctrines conventionally used in discussing legal obligations. He leaves his quasi-economic principle sufficiently ill-defined to be insusceptible of refutations, though not of implicit contradictions contained in his own later arguments for procedural justice.

We can now understand why Nozick has taken such elaborate pains to replace Locke's derivation of the minimal state with one that excludes the social compact. A social compact makes the law an act of popular will and hence an ongoing exercise in coercion. By obeying the law one is submitting to the will of the people: the many coerce the few, the majority the minority. By contrast, if the law were limited only to what would come into being in any case as the unintended consequence of non-coercive acts, one could obey it, much as one submits to the laws of physics, without feeling the visible hand of coercion. Nozick's animus against the social contract leads him to underline this point with a deeply felt satiric passage, the most powerful piece of writing in the book, suggesting that the ability to cast a vote on one's taxes is barely distinguishable from slavery. In both cases the product of one's labor is expropriated by a higher will over which one has no real influence.

Now, unlike Nozick's views on philosophical method, this one provides the real unifying thread of the book, which is less a celebration of liberty than a trembling at governmental coercion. Yet the more one sympathizes with the desire to limit state power the more one will see wisdom in John Locke's approach. For, even if maintaining order is the sole duty of the state, there will remain the questions of who is to define a threat to order, the means by which to deal with this threat, and—what is essential to law enforcement—the means by which to instill a general sense of obligation to assist the authorities. The difference between a night-watchman state and a police state lies in how these questions are resolved. Locke's answer is now an American commonplace: he saw the state as based on specific, limited, conscious, and *(in extremis)* revocable grants of political authority. These are symbolized in a social compact which provides not so much a license for ongoing coercion as a standard for ongoing popular participation in state power, and for constitutional limitations on its exercise. Locke saw that for law to appear as admonitory and non-coercive rather than arbitrary and threatening it must, in Jefferson's paraphrase, derive "its just powers from the consent of the governed." Better a government of laws established consciously and authoritatively than an unconstituted invisible-hand regime depending on some professor's postulate about the felt moral scruples of a monopolistic policing-services corporation.

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A reflective libertarian will see Nozick's book not as an improvement but as a travesty on Locke's restrained constitutionalism. To posit a night-watchman state without a conscious agreement on the sources and limits of its authority is a prescription for order without law. Better to admit that legitimate state action presupposes an element of coercion, which must be constituted and limited, than to pursue a chimera of non-coercive government which leaves open the door for the well-known fascist excesses in the name of protecting property. In the end, disjoining coercion from legitimacy results in an inability to deal with the phenomenon of law, an anomaly from which Nozick escapes in his last chapter by envisioning a utopia in which there is no need for "adjudication."

THE second conceptual difficulty is not central to Nozick's world view but it does lead him down a wrong path. He accepts uncritically the widespread use in libertarian circles of liberty and equality as if they were mutually exclusive and conflicting concepts. This is one standby of partisan politics that it should be the aim of a libertarian philosopher to dispel. In many Western countries there is a self-styled party of liberty (called a party of greed, reaction, or privilege by its opponents) which sees itself as opposed to one or another party espousing equality (also called envy, mob rule, or *bouleversement*). But as normally used the two concepts interpenetrate. If we agree that Nozick is correct in opening his book with the reaffirmation that all individuals have certain inalienable rights, then we have already accepted the principle of equality (equal rights) into the definition of political liberty. As a matter of practical politics this relation helps to explain why policies which extend liberty can simultaneously advance equality.

To see the two ideals as polarities leads one into a misdirection of polemical energies of the kind that occupies Nozick in the second part of his book. Here he undertakes to explode egalitarian and other arguments for redistribution of wealth and income. Egalitarian arguments for distributive justice, he thinks, are "generally acknowledged to be the most weighty and influential" for a more than minimal state. In this he is mistaken: the case for distributive justice has been and remains a good deal less weighty and influential in justifying statism than arguments under many other headings: war, order, nation-building, economic development, productivity, job security, cultural unity, public education, and modern sewage treatment.

In the English-speaking world the ideal of liberty itself has provided some of the most popular justifications for the redistribution and expropriation of property. Some, adapting an insight from Aristotle, have seen a large class of middling property owners as the best guarantor of a regime of liberty against mob tyranny, on the one hand, and oligarchy, on the other. They have advocated a middleward distribution of wealth and the political power flowing from it, as a means of preserving liberty by preventing class warfare between the rich and poor. The Founders of the American Republic were all aware that the balance of property was closely related to the balance of power and the prospects of liberty in a republic, and this theme has never been absent from American political thought or legislation.

It has also been in the name of liberty that other writers have advocated a minimal level of education, services, and material security. Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, neither of them "statists" or "egalitarians," urged compulsory universal education on the grounds that rights are meaningless if one leads a brutish life without the capacity to enjoy them. Many who argued for child-labor laws used similar arguments, and many current arguments for a minimum-income floor and "equality of opportunity" proceed in the area where liberty and equality overlap. It is not, of course, essential that Nozick feel bound by the works

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within the tradition in which he is writing, but it is disturbing that he writes as if arguments which derive from intuitions much more penetrating than his own were, like Locke's views on the social compact, of small account. By disposing delightfully of the more fatuous arguments of the levelers he believes that he has disposed of all the weightier justifications for a more than minimal state.

In one sense he is correct. While scoring some very telling points against John Rawls, he argues, convincingly, that the attempt to produce any specified distribution of property or income requires continuous state interference in people's liberties. His point applies across the board. The attempt to pursue *any* objective through the apparatus of government—whether to redistribute property or to protect it, whether to impose a specified pattern on the future or to preserve a vague set of values—involves continuous interference in individual liberty, some of it by manipulation, some by deterrence, some by outright coercion. The minimal state, therefore, cannot be defined in terms of any purpose save a dedication to the procedures of its own self-limitation. Nozick puts us on the track of seeing this, even though he is prevented from formulating it by the very habits of thought that he views as his entitlement to speak authoritatively on politics.

There are, of course, many pilpulistic virtues to this book that will make extracts from it pedagogically useful (notably his oft-cited pages demonstrating why Wilt Chamberlain is entitled to a higher salary than his teammates). But however devoted one is either to popularizing philosophy in America or to giving libertarianism a fair hearing, one should not mistake the essential thrust of this work. Nozick has given us a vision of a libertarianism without law, order without consent, and political philosophy without coherence. He thus fails by his own ideals, and there are none higher: truth and liberty.

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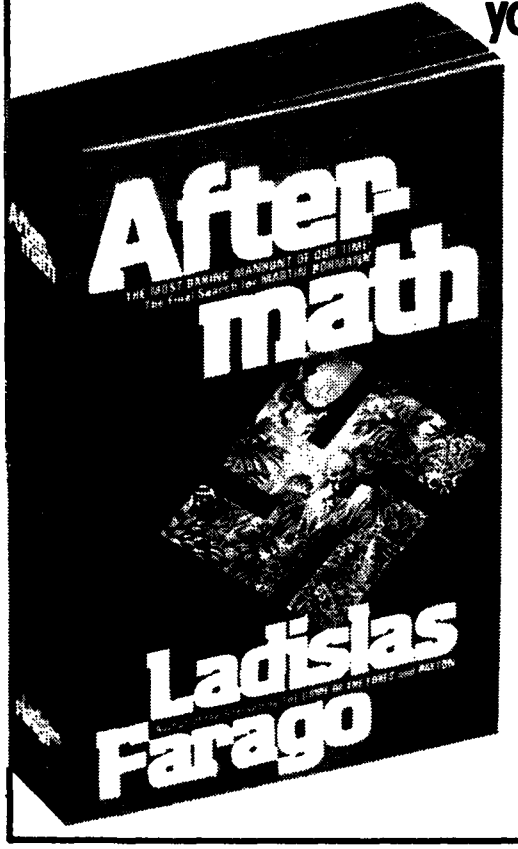

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Writing & Oppression

BLACK FICTION. By ROGER ROSENBLATT. *Harvard. 211 pp. $8.50.*

Reviewed by EVA HOFFMAN

ROGER ROSENBLATT'S study of black fiction is a valuable addition to the existing criticism of black writing, especially since, in attempting to apply literary rather than sociopolitical criteria to the subject, it represents a successful modification of the approach taken by most previous studies. While literary criteria are obviously not the only appropriate ones and may suffer from their own incompleteness, Rosenblatt's approach offers a useful and an illuminating redressing of the balance. As he notes, criticism of black writing has often been a pretext for black history. In recent works like Addison Gayle, Jr.'s *The Way of the New World: The Black Novel in America*, standards of judgment are overtly political, and the value of novels is gauged by the notions of black identity they propound. Stephen Butterfield, in *Black Autobiography*, another recent study, tries to weld together political and stylistic analysis, but he takes political ideas as the standard of measure, seeing style as a direct outgrowth and reflection of them.

Rosenblatt starts from the opposite end (although a kind of welding occurs in his study as well). His different starting point is perhaps a kind of luxury, dependent on the existence of more explicitly political studies, but it is a luxury fertile in its results: although novels assuredly spring from political circumstances, they react to them in ways other than ideological, and to talk about them primarily as instruments of ideology is to ignore much of the fictional enterprise. Rosenblatt's literary analysis thus uncovers affinities and connections in black fiction which the political studies overlook or are not concerned with.

Writing critically about black fic-

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tion presupposes the giving of a satisfactory answer to a number of prior questions. Is there, first of all, a sufficient reason, other than one based on the racial identity of the authors, to group all these works together? How is black fiction distinct from American fiction in general? Or from modern fiction, with which it is largely contemporaneous? Rosenblatt tackles these questions early on, and answers that black fiction constitutes a distinct body of writing with a recognizable literary tradition. Looking at a diversity of novels written roughly over the period of the last eighty years, he finds in them recurring concerns and designs independent of chronology. These "deep" and repeating structures are thematic, and they spring, not surprisingly, from the central and overwhelming fact that the black characters in these novels exist in a hostile white culture, and that whether they try to conform to or rebel against that culture, they remain circumscribed by its definitions.

The five chapters of Rosenblatt's study elaborate the implications of this thematic *donnée*. Through discussions of close to twenty individual works, the book establishes a kind of typology of black fiction. The discussions concentrate on tracing the fortunes of various protagonists and their responses to the conditions imposed upon them. In spite of the range of subjective reactions chosen by black heroes and heroines (the chapter titles—"Eccentricities," "Exceptional Laughter," "White Outside," "The Hero Vanishes,"—suggest some of them), Rosenblatt finds that again and again they are defeated by objective circumstances.

The particular historical actuality animating black fiction guarantees that its characters live in relentlessly determined worlds. They are doomed to become what they are slated for, condemned to repeat the past not because they do not learn from it, but because history does not learn from them. No matter what resources of will, wiliness, intelligence, or wit they bring to their situation, no matter how close they seem to come to breaking out of the circles constraining them, they almost inevitably turn out to conform to their destiny, to the expectations imposed on them from the outside. Time does not bring change or progress, and the usual institutional or personal means of improving one's condition (education, love, religion), fail to propel them outside fate. Cyclical determinism, then, is the unifying concept of *Black Fiction*.

THE special set of conditions which constitutes the "subject" of black fiction distinguishes it from modernist writing in general by making the alienation of the protagonist and the novelist's critique of accepted values more extreme. The novels' backbone of "hard data" increases their force by placing the heroes in inescapable, because actual, binds. In differentiating black protagonists from existentialist heroes, Rosenblatt writes, using the example of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*: "Kafka's K. is beset by allegorical creatures who function in abstract and dreamlike circumstances; whereas the Invisible Man's enemies, allegorical as their names may be, are real and have historical antecedents. In both sets of instances the nightmares are overwhelming, but only in one set do the heroes have the possibility of awakening." The distinction is interesting for what it suggests about the sources of impact in black fiction—that they may be dependent on some proximity to historical fact. Black novels, Rosenblatt claims, do not overreach themselves by straining for abstract universality, and that is all to their advantage.

At times Rosenblatt's thesis becomes too wide an umbrella, covering ideas which do not easily fit under it, as when he talks about the inversions of value that result from living in a distorted mirror-image of the normative world. Thus, for Bigger Thomas of Richard Wright's *Native Son*, murder

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becomes an instrument of creation, white the color of fear, and the Christian cross an emblem of hypocrisy and evil. Rosenblatt makes these inversions nearly synonymous with the notion of circularity, but the connection is in fact elusive. Again, interpretations are occasionally worked for more than they will yield. It may be legitimate to speak of Bigger Thomas as an inverted redeemer, but to say that he "is the native Son who would make the blind (Mrs. Dalton) to see, the lame (Gus) to walk again, who would purify and cleanse the wicked and ignorant (Bessie) and who would lead the little children (Buddy)," is to push a sound idea so far it loses its grounding in the novel it means to explain, which, although it certainly makes use of large Christian concepts, does not draw such exact parallelisms as this to biblical texts.

Some of the finest analyses in the book are performed on characters who escape rigid categories—for example, Langston Hughes's Simple, about whom Rosenblatt writes with vivacity and acumen. Simple's humor is itself seen as a way of evading, or at least providing a saving insight into, the situation defining him. The humor accomplishes this by being subtle, multileveled, unpredictable, and agile—and this in turn encourages a particularity of analytical observation on Rosenblatt's part which enlivens the discussion of the Simple collections.

Black Fiction anticipates many of the problematic issues raised by its subject, but it does leave some questions unasked and unanswered, and most of these fall within the realm of the aesthetic. Thematic analysis, Rosenblatt's chosen mode of criticism, allows for considerable objectivity, and he explicitly states that it is not his intention to judge the merit of the various works—yet this seems an unnecessary reluctance, especially since an attempt to appraise might have led to interesting results. Thus, some of the novels, in summary, appear to be structurally diffuse. Is this a defect, or are the authors working out of, or trying to forge, a different kind of aesthetic? Again, the style of some black novels (*Cane, Home to Harlem*), verges on expressionism or surrealism; does this provide a counterpoint to the thematic determinism of the plot, which is usually conveyed through more naturalistic modes of expression? And finally, although Rosenblatt considers it an advantage that the situations depicted are real, what about their extremity? Does this not contain a danger, for the writer of fiction, of encouraging starkly polarized statements and symbols?

In spite of such omissions, what Rosenblatt includes in his discussion makes for an astute and worthwhile study. *Black Fiction* brings to our attention some fascinating and little-known works (for example, James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*); it surveys a wide variety of novels and identifies terms that allow us to see black writing as part of a coherent literary tradition. Its argument is tightly constructed, and its forthright, lucid style attests to a level-headed and penetrating understanding of its subject.

Light on the Middle East

ARABIC POLITICAL MEMOIRS AND OTHER STUDIES. By ELIE KEDOURIE. *Frank Cass. 327 pp. $18.50.*

Reviewed by GIL CARL ALROY

ELIE KEDOURIE is a political scientist who believes that one must first get to know the Middle East and its history before writing about it—a species rarer than one might suppose, and a precious resource amid the large company of instant experts on the Middle East whose views now fill our news magazines and foreign-policy journals. Kedourie has taught politics at the London School of Economics since 1953, and has edited the journal *Middle Eastern Studies* since 1964. He is the author of *England and the Middle East* as well as of one study of nationalism and another of the two great Muslim thinkers, Afghani and Abduh. Some of his many articles in the British press and elsewhere have been collected in *The Chatham House Version*, to which is now added the volume under review. *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies* assembles seventeen previously published essays and two new ones in an apparent hodgepodge of themes from which a certain order can be distilled.

Several essays included here offer an outline of Arab governmental systems and politics. What Westernization has wrought in the Arab world is not a duplication of the West's political pattern so much as a transition from one form of despotism to another, more modern one. Constitutionalism—a Western invention—has proved an almost total failure. Political "parties" are vastly different from what they represent in the West, where a natural context has existed for them since the Middle Ages in parliaments and estates. But, Kedourie writes:

> Such representative institutions were absent in the Muslim world, and it is therefore not surprising that only contact with Europe made organization into parties for political action familiar and attractive. Familiar and attractive, that is, to the small minority that was open to European influences, and which was therefore critical of native and traditional institutions. Parties were therefore at first usually organized or inspired by radicals who were intent on drastic reforms; and, because such parties had, in the absence of representative institutions, little scope to maneuver, their radicalism became intensified; this very radicalism alienated the authorities who, often trying to suppress these parties, forced them underground. . . .

Subsequent experience with government-manipulated parliaments in the Arab world further inhibited the rise of coherent parliamentary and electoral organizations dedicated to the acquisition of popular support and the exercise of politi-

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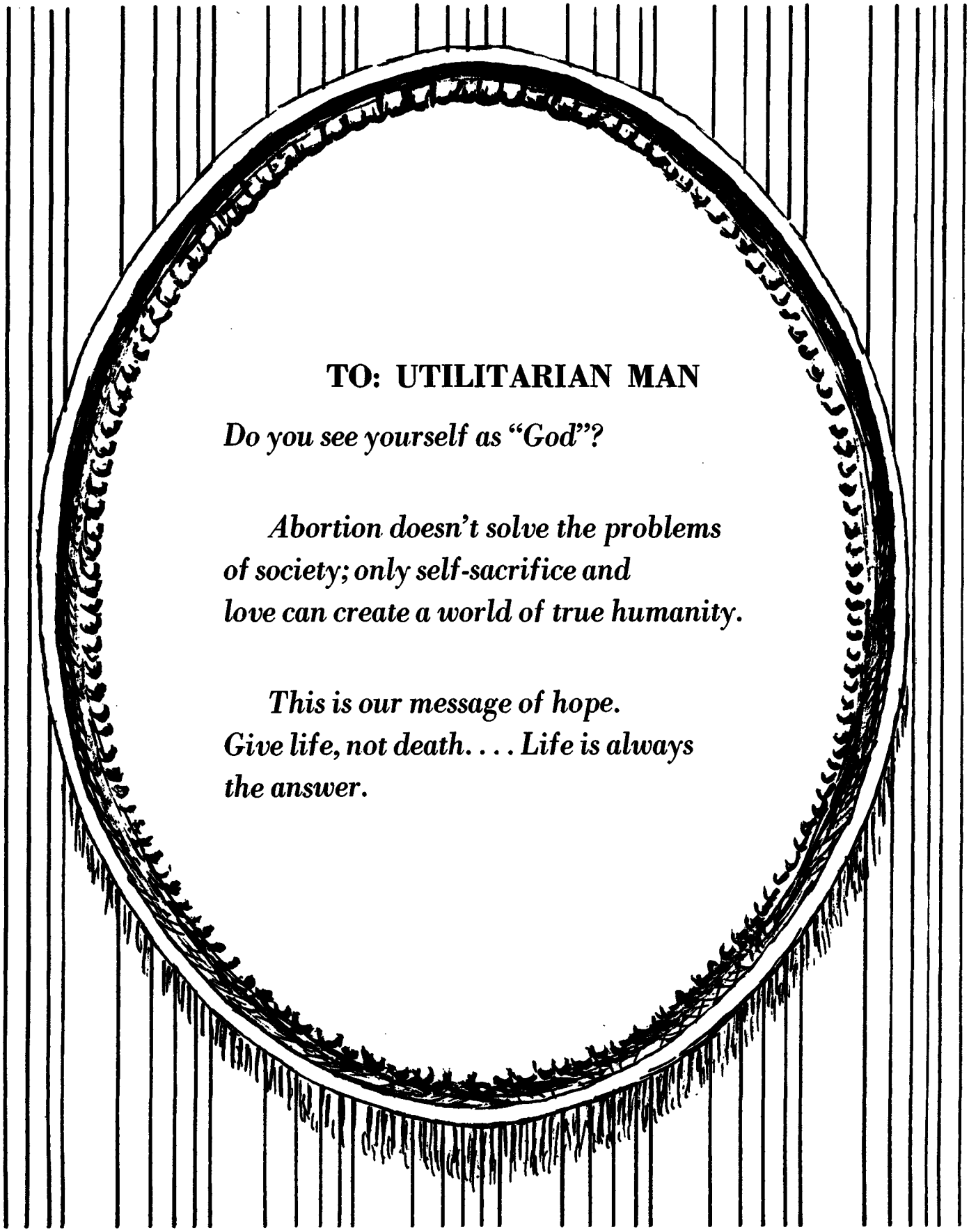

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cal power within legislatures. With the continued erosion of traditional society and the rise of literacy and of communications, the trend instead has been toward movements centering on charismatic leaders as repositories of unfettered power.

A captivating introduction to the Arab political style is provided in the title essay, "Arabic Political Memoirs." Kedourie finds the key to Arab nationalism in the disintegration of the last large Muslim empire, that of the Ottomans (most political scientists concerned with the area mistakenly regard Arab nationalism as a brand-new phenomenon). Arab-speaking Muslims "discovered" their own nationalism, he argues, in reaction less to Ottoman despotic power itself than to the overthrow of that power by the Young Turks, whose promise of reforms and democracy posed a threat to the dominance of Islam. As one of many contemporary observers writes: "Far from being enthusiastic over the prospects of liberty, fraternity, and a parliament to redress their grievances, the great majority [of Muslim Arabs] are strongly opposed to a change in which they think they foresee a very real danger to Muslim supremacy." And another: "There were many people who feared that the Young Turks thought more of their political ideas than of the injunctions of the Muhammedan religion, and that the Jews [in the Ottoman empire] showed a tendency to think that they need no longer show any respect for the ruling race and the dominant religion." Kedourie notes: "This feeling of Muslim superiority, which a century of reverses at the hands of Europe had shaken but also exacerbated, goes far to make intelligible the uncompromising opposition which from the very begining the Palestinians offered to Zionism."

A number of essays here deal with the attitudes toward Arabs and Jews in the Middle East held by leading Anglo-American personages both diplomatic and military. They make for a thoroughly disturbing picture. In an essay on British diplomacy on the eve of World War I, Kedourie uncovers "fustian fantasies" and "extremes of credulity" in men to whom the British Foreign Secretary looked for reliable information on the Middle East. In "The Apprentice Sorcerers," he limns the mind of those Americans charged with formulating policy toward the Arab world in the Nasser period; their utter ignorance of the real Middle East, fueled by boundless enthusiasm for engineered solutions, was responsible for the installation of a number of military cliques which turned out to be injurious to American interests. Something of the flavor of their mentality may be conveyed in the fact that the view held of Gamal Abdel Nasser by prominent American officials, as well as by all our various ambassadors to Egypt, was precisely opposite to what the Egyptian President soon proved himself to be.

The great relevance of Kedourie's historical studies hardly needs to be demonstrated at a time when the process of self-induced Western capitulation to the utterly vulnerable Arab oil producers has come to seem irreversible. Yet it is only from a scholar and writer like Kedourie—deeply informed, sane, and unfailingly fair in his judgments—that we can hope to learn how to unlearn all the false ideas about the Arab mind with which we have become encumbered, not to mention the dangerous policies that flow from those ideas.

The Brancusi Pebble

ROOTS OF ART. By ANDREAS FEININGER. *Viking. 176 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by JAMES TRILLING

BEST known for his work as a *Life* magazine staff photographer between 1943 and 1962 Andreas Feininger has also published a number of technical manuals and collections of his own photographs. The subjects of the latter have varied from cities to trees, shells, and other natural forms, but to all his work he brings an intense concern with structure and design, and with technical perfection displayed in precision of detail. Feininger's love of precision in both its artistic and scientific aspects is not surprising since he was trained first (at the Bauhaus) as a cabinet-maker and then as an architect and began his photographic career as an architectural photographer. While acknowledging influences as diverse as Edward Weston and Man Ray, he has made a unique contribution through his mastery of extreme close-up and telephoto techniques, which enable him to capture forms and details not ordinarily recorded.

Most of the pictures in Feininger's most recent book, *Roots of Art,* are close-ups from nature, but there are also a number which interpret works of art. All are of impressively high quality and many are strikingly beautiful, though a disturbingly large proportion are similar to—or even identical with—photographs already published in, for example, Feininger's *The Anatomy of Nature* (1956) or Ralph Hattersley's *Andreas Feininger* (1973). But the book cannot be judged by its artistic merits alone, since Feininger is concerned with more than just visual effect. His intention, he tells us, is to encourage the preservation of nature by calling attention to the unnoticed beauty of even the most ordinary objects: fishbones, for example, or pebbles or a bit of feather. This is laudable. But the method he has chosen for focusing our attention on these neglected forms—if, indeed, they really are neglected—leads him to make verbal and pictorial statements which are, frankly, embarrassing.

As the title implies, Feininger believes that the forms which appear in art are somehow preexistent in nature. "Everything made by human hands," he writes, "and most things conceived by the human mind have their prototypes in nature." This is a poetic rather than a scientific idea, but it is not nonsense, and certainly it is not new. In 1851 Ruskin wrote something very similar in *The Stones of Venice:* ". . . beautiful orna-

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ment, wherever found, or however invented, is always either an intentional or unintentional copy of some constant natural form. . . ." But Ruskin is very circumspect. His claim is that carefully selected natural shapes, when stripped of all extraneous detail, provide the best possible examples of formal beauty. He is concerned only with the most irreducible forms in nature—crystals, the outline of a leaf, the bend of a bough—and, in art, with the relatively simple and abstract forms or ornament. Feininger seems to feel no need of such caution. He would have us believe that not only simple or abstract forms, but all the complexities of figural and landscape art, are directly related to shapes found in nature. An Aztec architectural carving, for example, is compared to the ridges on the back of a trapdoor spider. The pattern on a shell suggests a mountain landscape. Part of a hollow tree is photographed in such a way as to suggest a face, and of it Feininger says: "Is it possible that primitive man, inspired in a dumb, semiconscious way by fossils or faces seen in a piece of wood, took his first, faltering steps on a road that ultimately led to Michelangelo?"

Feininger seems genuinely convinced that such analogies are, and have always been, basic to man's perception of both art and nature. In fact, of course, they demand a particular kind of visual sophistication which is by no means universal. The tribal artist, for example, often skillfully exploits the natural beauty of his materials, but he very rarely takes his inspiration from the chance resemblance of some natural object to a face or a figure. Feininger should know this, for he has looked at primitive art and photographed it sensitively. When he compares water-worn pebbles to sculpture by Arp and Brancusi, there is at least some link between the creation of the artistic forms and the appreciation of the natural ones; they are active and passive responses to the same aesthetic impulse. Similarly, the juxtaposition of limestone concretions with figures by Picasso could be taken in the humorous spirit of many of Picasso's own works. But *Roots of Art* is wholly lacking in humor, and Feininger's approach does not distinguish between primitive and modern art.

To OBSERVE and interpret nature has long been a major role of the Western artist. Feininger carries this role to a naive and literal extreme, and, which is worse, he attributes to other cultures the freedom of observation and association that our own culture allows *him*. There is no denying, however, that as an artist he has used this freedom beautifully. His pictures of plants and shells, in particular, combine detail and richness of surface with a perfectly assured sense of underlying form. This is no less true of his photographs of sculpture. Especially fine is a Lachaise nude, in which subtle use of light suggests equally the mass of the figure and the texture of the bronze itself. The result is a tactile vividness which, even in two dimensions, matches and perhaps surpasses the original. Here, as in almost all of his work, Feininger's most notable quality is his refusal to sacrifice the wholeness of an object to a love of pure form. The few exceptions are well chosen. Two fishbones, for example, photographed at such close range that they are unrecognizable, become splendidly effective abstractions. Here, if anywhere, Feininger's claim to reveal unexpected sources of beauty is fully justified.

With photographs like these, it would be easy simply to ignore Feininger's ideas on art and nature. But ideas of this kind, useless as they are from a scientific standpoint, have interesting implications for the appreciation of art. *Roots of Art* is only the most recent of a number of attempts to show a connection between natural and artistic forms. These attempts have been almost exclusively visual rather than verbal, as though in admission that the problem is inaccessible to reason and argument. The pictures are expected to speak for themselves, stubbornly insisting on some real connection, even if it is one we cannot explain

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in words. It is understandable that these visual arguments are mainly, though not always—Feininger is the obvious exception—concerned with the non-representational arts: ornament, following Ruskin's example, and, more recently, abstract art. An example from half a century ago is Karl Blossfeldt's *Art Forms in Nature* (1929), a collection of photographs of plants, taken in such a way as to emphasize their relation to decorative design. It might well serve as a craftsman's model-book, but its real purpose was a speculative one: to show that the forms of ornament occur already in nature. The implied argument of the photographs is, however, circular; we recognize the plant forms as ornamental because they are chosen to reflect ornament. Specifically, they reflect art-nouveau designs which were based on the very plant forms Blossfeldt illustrates.

It is clear from Blossfeldt's work, as from much of Feininger's, that the influence of art on the appreciation of nature is far more important than the influence of nature—in the restricted sense of natural forms—on art. The use of a form in art will condition our response to a similar form in nature. Blossfeldt responded to art nouveau, and photographed those aspects of nature that resembled it. Feininger compares a pebble to a Brancusi or a shoot of white ash to an ancient Persian ceramic figure. In each case what is happening is the re-creation of nature in the image of art.

OF GREAT and closely related interest is the question of the artistic value of scientific images—that is, images produced with the help of scientific instruments or as a record of scientific processes. Artists have traditionally derived inspiration from nature as perceived by the unaided senses, and the wealth of new forms revealed by modern science has been included reluctantly if at all. It was in the hope of combating this conservatism that Gyorgy Kepes edited *The New Landscape* (1956), a collection of scientific photographs with essays and comments from contributors in many fields. There is no attempt to show preexisting relationships between artistic and scientific forms; the book is meant simply to convey a sense of discovery, to open a new world of forms to artistic interpretation. One might well imagine that the exhaustion of traditional subject matter and the rise of abstract art makes this not only possible but imperative. But Kepes's approach is not widely shared; popular books on the subject continue to treat scientific photographs not as possible sources of inspiration for the artist, but as art in their own right, even when they were made with no thought to aesthetic effect.

In the catalogue of an exhibition held at Basel in 1959 *(Form in Art and Nature,* edited by G. Schmidt and R. Schenk), photographs similar to those used by Kepes—photomicrographs, cloud-chamber photographs, etc.—are juxtaposed with abstract and semi-abstract works of art. At first sight the resemblances are very striking. It is especially characteristic of both photographs and paintings that line plays a very small fole indeed, form being "conceived" in terms of large and often vague masses, or giving way completely to color and surface texture. (How different from Blossfeldt's linear ornament-forms!) But a closer look reveals how superficial the similarities are. It is clear at once that art cannot match, on any level, the richness and variety of nature. By the same token, however, nature's diversity reveals the artist's need—and power—of selection; even the most amorphous paintings are shown to have, by comparison, an intensity of purpose that might otherwise have gone unsuspected. The Basel catalogue thus makes a real contribution to our understanding of a difficult art, though it is certainly not the contribution its editors intended.

BUT the question remains: why produce such books in the first place? C. H. Waddington has made a study of the relation between modern art and science *(Behind Appearance,* 1969), and he is at pains to show that although abstract painting has been deeply influenced by scientific ideas (often misunderstood or freely interpreted by the artist), there has been almost no influence from scientific *forms.* Why, then, should obsessive efforts be made to relate art and science on a formal level? A clue is perhaps furnished by Robert Rosenblum's article, "The Abstract Sublime" (1961), which tries to elucidate the work of several modern painters by comparing it to representational art of the Romantic period. A Rothko, for example, is compared to certain pictures by Turner. It is as though the modern work could be understood only through the mediation of an earlier one, in which a similar use of color and paint is given emotional focus by easily recognized subject matter. Does not the same impulse lie behind popular attempts to link art with nature and science? Abstract art lacks a point of reference outside itself. So, to some extent, does primitive art, or any art based on unfamiliar conventions. Nature and technology provide convenient reference points—perhaps, to some people, necessary ones. A compromise like Waddington's is too abstract to be widely accepted, hence the demand for books like the Basel catalogue and *Roots of Art.*

The idea of art as representation runs very deep; even when abstraction has been accepted by the public there remains a desire to see, not, finally, nature reflecting art, but art once again reflecting nature. This need not mean a return to traditional realism, or even to subject matter as we usually think of it. For Rosenblum, art itself provides a kind of subject matter, emotionally explicit but distanced from physical reality. Popular (and no doubt largely instinctive) efforts in the same direction require something much more literal, but visible nature is always ready to hand for this purpose, and should that ever prove inadequate, the "new landscape" is already familiar enough to provide a satisfactory substitute.

While Feininger's book helps to illustrate these developments, by

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its artistic excellence it largely transcends them. Except in its precision it is in no sense scientific photography. The purely scientific image may have aesthetic appeal, but it is the appeal of the *objet trouvé,* which is rarely more than a pleasing curiosity. When Ruskin pointed out the beauty of naturally occurring lines and forms, he was careful to select and reproduce only the most perfect. This is something that Feininger also knows how to do, though his concern is with overall appearances rather than with irreducible forms. Not every pebble looks like a Brancusi, and not every photograph will make it look like one. Feininger is able to give the natural object all the interest and monumentality of a piece of sculpture. But in a sense it is the very richness of his vision, his ability to see art in nature and nature in art, that leads him to intellectual disaster. As I have tried to suggest, there is a continuing impulse in modern culture to exploit the accidental similarities between natural and artistic forms. By allowing this impulse to carry him so far, and, in particular, into the realm of representational art, Feininger has greatly damaged what is otherwise a beautiful and stimulating book.

CPUSA

THE RISE AND FALL OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM. By PHILIP J. JAFFE. Introduction by BERTRAM D. WOLFE. *Horizon Press. 236 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by PAUL FELDMAN

EARL BROWDER, the most successful and powerful leader the American Communist party ever had, once confessed that "while I was in Moscow I was like a child." Browder only began to grow up after Stalin, whom he idolized, kicked him out of the Communist family in 1945 and Browder could find no way back. Philip J. Jaffe tells the story of the Communist Party, U.S.A. (CPUSA) through the rise and fall of Browder, the party's general secretary in 1930-45. His stewardship spanned FDR's New Deal, Hitler's rise to power, the Stalin era in the USSR, the Hitler-Stalin pact, World War II, and the first days of the cold war.

Jaffe views from the inside the tortured history of the American Communist movement, which at its height had about 70,000 members and 30,000 more in its youth group, plus a wide circle of fellow travelers, of whom Jaffe himself was a leading representative. For many years Jaffe toed the party line in the magazine he edited on Asian affairs, *Amerasia.* He had a close political relationship with CP leaders, and was indicted in the famous "Amerasia Case" for publishing confidential State Department documents (although he was a piker by the standards of Daniel Ellsberg or even Jack Anderson).

As a close confidant of Earl Browder, before and after the general secretary was dumped by Moscow, Jaffe had a unique vantage point. He writes that after his expulsion Browder was torn between the need to maintain a romantic view of his past—perhaps to delude himself as well as others—and the desire to bring out the truth. After failing to write his autobiography, Browder turned to Jaffe for help. At first Jaffe declined because "Browder, like Stalin, was a rewriter of history," but when Browder, finally convinced that he never would be allowed to return to the party, began bit by bit to supply inside information and confidential Communist documents, Jaffe changed his mind. (It was not until 1960, some six years after the Khrushchev revelations, that Browder could bring himself to denounce Stalin by name.)

The material and documents he got from Browder, plus a deep understanding of the Communist movement, make Jaffe's book more than just a supplement to other histories of the American Communist party. Indeed, on a number of important questions Jaffe's book is definitive. In the matter of the dispute over whether the CPUSA took its orders from Moscow, for instance, Jaffe reveals that when Browder visited the Soviet Union in October 1938, he was instructed to acquire a specified short-wave receiver and to listen for messages in code. Published here for the first time are the September and October 1939 messages that Browder got from Moscow, laying down the line the American party should follow on the Hitler-Stalin pact and the joint invasion of Poland. Browder gave the new line his all. "This war," he wrote, "is an imperialist war, and the Jewish people . . . have nothing to gain in taking sides." When Hitler's army surprised Stalin and crossed the Soviet border, the line of course underwent total reversal, but what remained the same was that Left and Right were defined solely in relation to Soviet interests: it is not surprising that Browder could call FDR a "fascist" one day and a "great democrat" the next; and overnight the Socialist leader Norman Thomas went from being a "statesman" to a "social fascist."

Browder kept his radio and code book a secret from his party's politburo and central committee. Thus, former Communist Joseph R. Starobin, in *American Communism in Crisis: 1943-1957,** can honestly maintain that the CP was not under any direct orders from Moscow. Through his knowledge of the international Communist world and the USSR's role within it, Jaffe is in a much better position than Starobin to see how much the American CP was influenced and shaped by Moscow's objectives. (Starobin's book is nevertheless worth reading, particularly for its description of the American CP's internal life and structure.)

IN regard to the continuing controversy over who started the cold war, Jaffe stresses the importance of an article appearing in the April 1945 issue of *Cahiers de Communisme,* the theoretical organ of the French Communist party, under the signature of the

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* Harvard University Press, 331 pp., $12.95.

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party leader, Jacques Duclos. This article, Jaffe concluded and Browder came to agree, was "the first shot in the cold war," bearing the message that Communist parties and governments throughout the world must reverse gears and prepare for a confrontation with Stalin's wartime allies. In his article Duclos specifically attacked Browder for capitulation to capitalism (a crime that Duclos himself was later accused of) and gave the "directive not only to the American Communist party but to all Communist parties to prepare for a Soviet postwar foreign policy in which Browder's expulsion and the reconversion of the American Communist party to its prewar leftist line were only minor incidents." Jaffe marshals considerable evidence and logic to make the case that Duclos was only the postman delivering a letter from Stalin.

Almost overnight, Browder was deprived of his post (he was expelled from the party in 1946), and reviled by those who had previously worshipped him. As Stalin moved to sharpen the conflict with the West, he also moved to kill, purge, or chasten those Communists in the Soviet Union and elsewhere whose views contradicted his own on the coming economic crisis in the West, or who were still identified with his old view stressing the viability of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the wartime allies. Asked in 1949 when the cold war began, Browder said, "I would judge that in Stalin's inscrutable mind, it began the day it became clear that Hitler's armies would be defeated."

When Browder got the ax—figuratively, not literally as had Trotsky—he maintained, with a great deal of truth, that he had only taken the position on coexistence which Stalin himself had proclaimed with Roosevelt and Churchill at their Teheran meeting in December 1943. To Stalin, Teheran was a tactic, designed to gain more military aid from his suspicious allies. To Browder, as he wrote at the time in his book *Teheran,* it was the dawn of a new era of cooperation between the Western capitalist democracies and Soviet Communism, designed to win the war and construct the peace that would follow. While Browder was trying to build a single world, Stalin was deciding on the need to divide the world into two camps, and it was in the opposite camp that he placed his allies of a short while ago, dropping Browder in for good measure.

Browder has been labeled, with some justice, a "premature détenter." But there are substantive differences between Browder's version of coexistence and Brezhnev's. The present Soviet leadership uses the concept of détente as a strategy for achieving the greatest amount of expansion at the least risk, while the USSR arms itself for a major shift in Moscow's favor in the world balance of power. Browder, who had not given up the struggle for Communism, seems nevertheless to have genuinely believed in peaceful coexistence, not just as a tactic but as a means of averting war between the two systems; the triumph of Communism would come about, in his view, through peaceful means. In fact, in *Teheran* he outlined an economic basis for peace through something akin to the Marshall Plan and the European Common Market, a structure which would have the participation of the U.S., Great Britain, and the USSR and keep them united through a community of interests.

WHAT were the factors that led to the decline and fall of the American Communist party? Joseph Starobin, in *American Communism in Crisis,* adopts Daniel Bell's thesis that the American radical movement was doomed because its sectarianism, its evangelical zeal, and its inability to resolve the conflict between reform and revolution, made it, *"in but not of* the world." Bell's analysis is actually more relevant to the Socialist party than to the CP. Jaffe argues, more convincingly, that the American Communist movement declined because it was *not in but of* the Communist world. That does not mean that American influence did not help to shape it, or that it ignored peculiarly American problems. A

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leading socialist theorist, Max Shachtman, observed that during the New Deal the CPUSA contributed to major progressive reforms and (when not trying to exploit the Negro question for ulterior objectives) it helped to advance the struggle for civil rights, but that everything it touched became warped because basically the loyalty of the leadership was to Moscow and not to the American working class or the Negro movement.

Jaffe, however, makes too much of CP sectarianism. One of the major reasons for the CPUSA's failure, he argues, was that the "American party . . . propagandized the American people as if they were French or Italian or Bulgarian." (He recalls an old party member opening a speech with the slogan, "Workers and peasants of Brooklyn!") While this was true of the early movement, it was not true of the CP in the heyday of the Popular Front. Under Browder's leadership, in fact, the party became 200 percent American, so much so that Browder later complained that the Civil Service Commission was able to spot and weed out Communists by looking for "an advanced degree of patriotism." It was Browder, with an American knack for show business, who coined the phrase, "Communism is 20th-century Americanism." He created a mythical history for American Communism, clothing it in the nation's patriotic accessories and proclaiming the CP the only rightful heir to the tradition of Jefferson, Paine, and Lincoln.

During the war, Browder built alliances not with the American "peasantry" but with the National Association of Manufacturers, who appreciated his no-strike pledge and Communist discipline in the unions. (Browder revealed to Jaffe that not only did the Communists during World War II applaud the use of the anti-subversive Smith Act against the Trotskyists—it was later to be used against the CP itself—but they actually prepared the case for the Justice Department.) Ironically enough, the CP was freed from the incubus of sectarianism—it otherwise might have vegetated with other radical groups—as a result of directives from Moscow. Stalin needed the CPUSA to influence all segments of American society, including the NAM, to aid the USSR in its life-and-death struggle with Hitler. Thus an accident of history freed and impelled Browder to innovate, in a fashion no other American radical group could or would.

The American Communists were able to embrace a popular President, Roosevelt, and a popularly acclaimed program, the New Deal, and hence to garner much broader support than their views on international affairs would have commanded. With the appearance of a real American movement, the CP developed substantial influence in all sectors of American life. All this ended with the onset of the cold war, when, again in servile obedience to Moscow's wishes, the party ruptured its relationship with its wartime liberal allies and lost all its influence in the labor movement.

WHILE Jaffe's book throws new light on how the American Communist movement rose and fell, it leaves unanswered the enigma of why Browder (and many others like him) gave complete loyalty to a totalitarian system, and continued to do so even when this system had done him harm. In 1950, a debate on the question of whether the Soviet Union had a socialist system was held between Browder, who had been expelled by the CP four years before but still defended the Soviet system, and Max Shachtman, who had been expelled many years earlier for Trotskyist deviations and who argued that the Soviet system was an anti-democratic and thus an anti-socialist force. At the end of his remarks, Shachtman turned toward Browder and said, "There but for an accident of geography goes a corpse." This was no mere hyperbole. In the 1949

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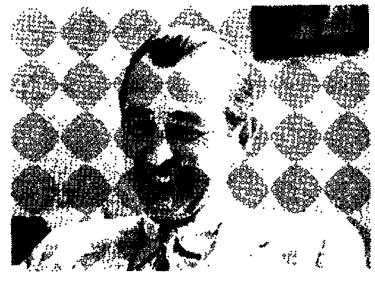

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purge trials in Budapest defendants were sentenced to death after confessing, among other "crimes," that they had held discussion classes on Browder's ideas. And yet Browder could still write to Moscow in the same year, noting that he remained "an unshakable partisan of socialist construction in the USSR."

As Jaffe's book demonstrates, Earl Browder wasted his substantial talents in the service of a movement which violated every one of its stated principles. His was a pathetic rather than a tragic figure. He never fully wrestled with the moral implications of his actions as a Communist, nor did he make a fight for his views within the party. To his credit Browder did refuse to retract his views on coexistence: "I don't want to be a political zombie," he said. And Jaffe mentions that he courageously spoke out on the treatment of Soviet Jews at a time when he still had not fully broken with the USSR. Toward the end of his life, according to Jaffe, Browder came to be strongly opposed to Communism and to consider himself a democratic socialist, even making one attempt in 1956 to convince Socialist party leader Norman Thomas to start an ingathering on the democratic Left. When Browder died on June 17, 1973 not one of his old comrades who still maintained a tie to the Communist party attended his funeral. And there was not one Communist publication in the world which even mentioned his death. He had been made an "unperson" the day he was excommunicated.

The bankruptcy and collapse of the U.S. Communist movement did not end the attraction of a good portion of America's intellectuals to left-wing totalitarianism, an attraction to elitism of which the Communist party may have been just as much an expression as a cause. That is why the story of Earl Browder—a strange mixture of real and self-serving social idealism, a man attracted to power and needing adulation, a devotee of authoritarian planning—continues to be so intriguing. While Jaffe's book does not tell us what made Browder run, it does help strip away a number of continuing illusions about the Communist movement—fostered yesterday by Browder's movement and today by revisionist historians and those who see more good in totalitarianism than in a flawed American democracy.

The Critic as Poet

VISION AND RESONANCE: TWO SENSES OF POETIC FORM. By JOHN HOLLANDER. *Oxford University Press. 313 pp. $12.50.*

TALES TOLD OF THE FATHERS. By JOHN HOLLANDER. *Atheneum. 100 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by ROBERT ALTER

Vision and Resonance, John Hollander's first critical book since *The Untuning of the Sky* (1961), proves to have been well worth waiting for. The earlier work was a comprehensive study of ideas about music, and the interrelation between music and poetry, in English verse of the 16th and 17th centuries. The shifting dialectic of attitudes toward music and verse is still very much part of Hollander's subject in his new book, but now he moves beyond literary history to a general analysis of how sound in poetry interacts with syntax, generic convention, and the visually scanned shape of the printed poem, to produce the complexities of poetic statement.

Vision and Resonance is the most subtle, convincing account I have seen of the operation of accentual syllabic verse in English. Hollander is meticulous in the use of concepts and terms where others have variously perpetuated a centuries-old legacy of vagueness, and the key distinctions he develops—such as between meter and rhythm, or between performative and descriptive scansion—seem not only precise but demonstrably valuable as he applies them. This enormously learned, technical study is a model of lucidity and, often, even of witty liveliness. The analysis of a variety of poetic texts from Donne to Blake to William Carlos Williams not only illustrates the general observations being made about English prosody, but also demonstrates how a discriminating approach through prosody can illuminate difficult or semantically dense poems. Hollander's readings of brief passages from Donne, Milton, and Blake have an Empsonian brilliance, without Empson's abrasive quirkiness: they impress one not as exercises in ingenuity but as fuller perceptions than previous readers have enjoyed.

The discussions of contrastive stress in English, and of the career of English enjambment (with special attention to Milton), are especially rich in such perceptions. In his account of Milton, Hollander finds the complex meanings of *Paradise Lost* in the interplay between metrical line and larger rhythm, between printed word-placement and unfolding syntax, between the poem seen and the poem heard: "These two impulses —the one toward systematic, static pattern, the other toward periodic flux and articulated paragraphing —are the warp and the weft of the verse fabric of *Paradise Lost.*" And in his final chapter, Hollander suggests that any poem must be located along the two axes of the eye and the ear, the former locked into meter, generic identity, tradition, collective literary experience, the latter associated with rhythm, the particular objects of representation, individual talent, the intuition of the moment. "The ear responds to the dimension of natural experience, the eye to that of convention." The distinction is so sweeping and simple that at first one suspects it cannot be altogether true, but it is surprising how sturdily the generalization holds up under scrutiny, as Hollander's own abundant illustrations from a variety of poetic texts make clear.

This way of conceiving two intersecting axes of poetry has one

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important consequence for literary ideology: in even the most radically iconoclastic poetry, tradition and convention remain an ineluctable dimension of the poem. Modern poets may wilfully ignore the old boundary lines of poetic genre, but none can escape from the convention-bound axis of the eye. The seeming metrical chaos in Blake, as Hollander shows, is actually a refashioning of an older, discarded English tradition of seven-stress lines. Walt Whitman may have dreamed of a wholly organic, nonconventional prosody, "claiming to have made a metrical principle out of the unique shapes of rhythm," but in fact what he did was to introduce a new metrical convention, based on clearly end-stopped lines, the coincidence between complete syntactical units and linearity being a strict rule for his ostensibly spontaneous, oracular verse. More recent American free-verse experiments, in analogous ways, either generate their own metrical conventions, or "engage certain prior conventions . . . to form a new tradition, discontinuous in some ways as it may be," and the flaunted metrical freedom of the verse frequently proves, upon analysis, to relate quite directly to Milton's innovative prosody in the burden of meaning carried by nuances of enjambment.

In elucidating Ben Jonson's constant invocation of classical models in his poetry, Hollander stresses what he calls "the modality of verse"; a poetry which avowedly elects long-established forms of expression works toward "creating discourse in an ideal community, within which the literary dialect would be as speech." Modern poets have often rejected all notions of the modality of verse, breaking down genre and decorum in the effort to forge a uniquely personal, purely *expressive* style. Some, however, like W. H. Auden, have actually reaffirmed modality, adopting from the tradition a variety of forms and styles through which they implicitly assert a public realm of literary discourse more durable than the transitory idiom of individual experience.

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THE reaching for modality explains, I think, the strength, the limitations, and the peculiarity of John Hollander's own poetry. It is heartening to discover in the scholarly analyst of prosody a poet who is himself a technical virtuoso, but Hollander's recurrent problem from the beginning of his career has been to escape the aridness of mere virtuosity. His first volume, *A Crackling of Thorns* (1958), is astonishing in the variety of styles so finely controlled by a young poet, but there is something ventriloquistic and frustratingly oblique in the way the poet treats his own experience. This continues to be true, I find, though in less obtrusive, more complicated ways, of Hollander's five subsequent volumes of verse. There are, to be sure, some notable exceptions, like the evocative title-poem of *Movie-Going* (1962), or the poems dealing with memory and childhood and adolescence in *Visions from the Ramble* (1965). The persistent problem, however, of Hollander's poetry is illustrated on almost every page of the last volume of verse before the present one, *The Night Mirror* (1971). Poem after poem reads like a distanced, abstractly conceived "treatment" of some idea or situation, a set exercise in rendering a quality or effect. The poet who had imitated the Elizabethans, Marvell, Dryden, Wordsworth, and many others finally seems to have arrived at a kind of accomplished voicelessness, in which the poem becomes an elegant arabesque of studied (sometimes precious) images concluding in a deft cadence with a word like "dust," "dark," or, alternately, "light."

This disembodied virtuosity continues to dominate many, though fortunately not all, of the poems in *Tales Told of the Fathers*. The difficulty, I would suggest, is that modality as Hollander tries to carry it out in his verse is no longer feasible because of what has happened to literary tradition and the language of poetry. Of course, no serious critic would find fault with Ben Jonson for not having a personal "voice," but one must remember that Jonson and his contemporaries shared, first, a hierarchical sense of literary kinds anchored in a hierarchical sense of social and cosmic schemes, and, then, the common humanistic education of a small literate elite, firmly based on a canon of Greek and Latin texts. Out of such a situation, it was possible for Jonson gracefully to assume the many voices of tradition for different poetic occasions, and, sometimes, even to use a voice of tradition to express starkly his own condition as a man (as in the unforgettable elegy, patterned after classical models, for his first son: "here doth lye/ *Ben. Jonson* his best piece of poetrie"). For a modern poet, on the other hand, to invoke or revive a whole mode of earlier poetry seems like a strenuous experiment in willed atavism.

One frequently feels the problem on the level of diction in *Tales Told of the Fathers*. Without a doctrine of sublime style for "lofty" subjects, phrases like "diurnal panache" and "the reservoir's onyx water" seem like mere preciosity, and the attempt, imagistically and lexically, to resuscitate a mythic mode in lines like "A Deus in the graciousness day,/Drunk with skyeyness," is inadvertently comic. And for a generation accustoming itself to no-frills flying, a poet cannot quite get away with rendering travel by plane in terms like these: "Huddled in silver/ Pinions of his steel eagle,/ He drops not down, but/ Plummets forward into clouds. . . ." Milton could do this for Lucifer falling—syntactic inversion, high-diction "pinions," obtruded enjambment, and all—but as a rendering of an airplane flight it seems an affectation.

YET, in poetry so conspicuously assembled out of antecedent poetry, there is one subject on which poet and manner can sometimes fall into the lovely alignment of illumination, and that is when the poem deals with the perplexing nature of poetry itself. There are several striking pieces of this sort in *Tales Told of the Fathers*, where Hollander's play of verbal and situational wit, his love of allusion and multiple styles, seem fully integrated with what he means to say. In the scary playfulness of "Cohen on the Telephone," the poem moves in a rapid allusive sweep from Exodus and Milton through Keats and the Elizabethans to *Tales of the Hasidic Masters* and the talmudic Celestial Echo, the poet's surrogate at the end attending to the ambiguous buzz of "the black sea shell" at his ear, receiving the threat, or promise: "The next voice you hear will be your own." "Mount Blank" vividly defines the struggle to engage some possible subject—the mountain "looking like/ The intense pictures of itself"—through memory and language. The poem wryly glances back at Shelley's "Mount Blanc," Wordsworth's "The Simplon Pass," at *King Lear* and *Paradise Lost*, in order to point up its own predicament after those primary masterworks, caught in a late self-conscious moment of literary history where all objects of representation prove to be "pictures of pictures,/ Or views of noise: postcards of roaring."

Finally, "Kranich and Bach," the concluding poem of this volume, combines a brooding meditation on art and mortality with, for once, concretely realized personal memory. The poet recalls his dead father playing Romantic *Lieder*, with a predominance of spooky ballad settings, on a Kranich, "a brand of piano no longer made." The implicit self-ironic comment here on Hollander's often archaizing verse is poignant. The father's son, now become an instrumentalist of another sort, knows that the same silence that overtook his father will claim him too, and so his poetry is aptly figured in the image of bravely, absurdly assertive music with which this poem ends: "Dark under the closed lid, Kranich and Bach wait,/ Silence standing up oneleggedly in song."

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